

COMPUTER ARTS

DESIGN
MATTERS

ISSUE #272

NOVEMBER 2017
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THE UK

EXCLUSIVE SURVEY

THE UK'S TOP 50 DESIGN STUDIOS

Discover the very best agencies in the country this year, as voted by their peers

UK STUDIO
RANKINGS
TOP 10 REVEALED
IN THE DARK

Turn off the lights!

PLUS

FOUR WAYS TO GO FREELANCE

How to make the leap successfully, from careful pre-planning to dealing with a sudden redundancy

Future

- 
01. STUDIO SUTHERL&
 02. NORTH
 03. MANVSMACHINE
 04. THE PARTNERS
 05. PENTAGRAM
 06. MADE THOUGHT
 07. GRAPHIC THOUGHT FACILITY
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Making the cover

Studio Sutherland is renowned for its smart, elegant solutions and technical ambition (for proof, see the D&AD Annual 2017, complete with flowing ribbons, on page 22), and earlier this year the studio's award-winning Agatha Christie stamps (explored in issue 268) beautifully exploited thermochromic and UV inks to reveal hidden clues and Easter eggs.

Our brief to Jim Sutherland and his team was simple: the cover should 'reveal' this year's top studios with glow-in-the-dark ink. After much "discussing, refining, critiquing and thinking," the lamp (including a moth fluttering to the light) was chosen.

"I've always loved the classic shapes of an angle poise lamp," Sutherland admits, "and it seemed to be a lovely visual connection with design studios."

Experiments with the special ink coating led to minor tweaks, but the original concept – with lamp illustration by Alan Levett – remained essentially unaltered. "It's often a case of stripping everything superfluous and leaving the simplicity of the idea itself," he explains. "There's so much visual clutter around that simple design often stands out." And how many covers stand out day *and* night?

Watch our special glow-in-the-dark cover being manufactured at www.bit.ly/ca-printfinishes

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STUDIO SUTHERL&

Jim Sutherland and Rosey Trickett are the award-winning, London based team who leapt to number one in our Studio Rankings this year. www.studio-sutherland.co.uk

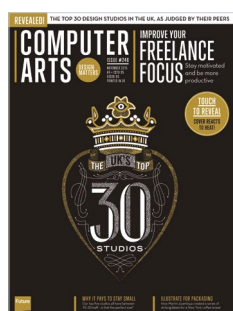


Sutherland and his team brainstormed plenty of ideas (top) before settling on the lamp (above). "We scribbled ideas with owls, jellyfish, light bulbs, filaments, matches, torches, glow worms, halos, stars, lighthouses, spotlights, candles, lightning bolts – anything that we felt would use the ink well." Plenty of time was spent under a dark coat, testing glowing ink.



2015 RANKINGS

Yorkshire-based Kyle Wilkinson (whose new venture we explore on page 15) created a striking cover that used photochromatic ink to reveal the rankings in daylight.



2015 RANKINGS

Heat-reactive thermochromic ink revealed the studio names in this suitably majestic cover by Spanish studio Vasava. Best viewed on a radiator.



2016 RANKINGS

Dynamic London duo Sawdust (who came 11th in the rankings that year) delivered one of our most popular covers ever, with an eye-popping, scratch-off extravaganza.

Editor's letter

Picking the top 50 studios out of a pool as rich and diverse as the UK design industry is no mean feat, and putting them in a meaningful order is trickier still.

Our method is simple enough: it's about peer reputation. The Players' Player Award, if you like. And judging by the feedback we've had, it genuinely means something for the rest of the industry to agree you're on the top of your game.

This is our fourth UK Studio Rankings, giving us a fascinating snapshot of UK design over that period. The steady performers, risers and fallers, and the occasional young pretender out of left-field that wows everyone.

As in previous years, stalwarts such as Pentagram and The Partners rub shoulders with smaller boutique outfits, like our previous winners Graphic Thought Facility, Made Thought and North. This year's rankings-topper Studio Sutherland is one of the smallest and youngest: a two-person outfit, three years old, powered by wit and ideas.

This venture may be fresh, but Jim Sutherland himself is a veteran – cutting his teeth at The Partners and HGV, before co-founding the multi-award-winning hat-trick. His beautiful execution of our cover proves the power of a simple, smart idea that doesn't need a big agency behind it.

Small isn't everyone's cup of tea, however: in early 2018, WPP will merge The Partners, Brand Union, Lambie-Nairn, Addison Group and VBAT into a new global super-agency. The effect on next years' rankings for fourth-placed The Partners, also Best of Show at our Brand Impact Awards, will be fascinating to watch.

No doubt many of you would kill to land a job at one of the studios on this year's list. But if you're eying up a freelance career instead, our other main feature this month charts four possible routes into self-employment, and is packed with advice for getting the most from whichever one you choose. Good luck, and see you next month.

● NICK CARSON
Editor
nick.carson@futurenet.com

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FEATURING



MATT BAXTER

Co-founder and creative director at Brighton-based studio Baxter & Bailey, Matt argues that the much-maligned word 'nice' deserves a reappraisal in his column on page 19.

www.baxterandbailey.co.uk



CATERINA BIANCHINI

Working across art direction, editorial and branding, Caterina runs a one-woman studio in London. She shares her advice in our piece on four key routes for going freelance, which starts on page 34.

www.caterinabianchini.com



LOCKET AEBISCHER

Senior account manager at Someone, Locket joins Studio Output's Dan Moore to discuss how better resource management can oil the wheels in the studio in our video special, page 76.

www.someoneinlondon.com



ROSALBA CAFFORIO

Concluding our practical workshop series with World Illustration Award-winning illustrators, Rosalba shares her tips and techniques for digital fashion illustration on page 88.

www.rosalbacafforio.com



STUART YOUNGS

Former creative director at Purpose, Stuart now runs start-up venture Texture, at the cross-section between design and emerging tech. He shares his love of fashion labels on page 98.

www.studiotexture.co.uk

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FUTURE PUBLISHING LTD
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EDITORIAL

Nick Carson
Editor
nick.carson@futurenet.com

Mark Wynne
Art editor
mark.wynne@futurenet.com

Rosie Hilder
Operations editor
rosie.hilder@futurenet.com

Gareth Jones
Video producer

CREATIVE BLOQ
www.creativebloq.com

Julia Sagar
Acting editor

Ruth Hamilton
Associate editor

Ella Taylor
Production editor

Dom Carter
Staff writer

MANAGEMENT

Amy Hennessey
Editor-in-chief
Will Shum
Senior art editor
Dave Harfield
Head of editorial operations

CONTRIBUTIONS

Jamie Ellul, Franklin Till, Anna Higgie, Marianna Madriz, Tom May, Kate Marsh, Katie Nicholls, Craig Oldham, Julia Sagar, Laura Snoad, Studio Sutherland, Matt Baxter, Garrick Webster, Steve Wright, Stuart Youngs

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ADVERTISING

Media packs are available on request.
Claire Dove Commercial director
claire.dove@futurenet.com

Mike Pyatt Advertising manager
01225 788204 michael.pyatt@futurenet.com

Chris Mitchell Account director
01225 687832 chris.mitchell@futurenet.com

Kate Butterfield Account manager
01225 687439 kate.butterfield@futurenet.com

INTERNATIONAL

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Contact the International department
to discuss partnership opportunities.
Matt Ellis Head of international licensing
matt.ellis@futurenet.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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UK order line and enquiries: 0344 848 2852
International: +44 (0) 344 848 2852
Online: www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk
Sharon Todd Head of subscriptions

CIRCULATION

Darren Pearce Circulation director
01202 586200

PRODUCTION

Mark Constance Head of production, US/UK
Clare Scott Production project manager
Joanne Crosby Advertising project manager
Jason Hudson Digital editions controller
Steve Wright Digital edition coordinator
Vivienne Calvert Production manager

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Aaron Asadi Creative director, magazines
Ross Andrews Art and design director

Printed by:

Wyndeham Peterborough, Storey's Bar Road,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 5YS
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MEET THE TEAM



NICK CARSON
EDITOR

Nick rounded off a tiring-but-inspiring week that included two D&AD events, hosting the BIAs and two video shoots with a mini London stag do, where he discovered to his peril that beer pong is not his forte.



MARK WYNNE
ART EDITOR

Mark visited Rachel Whiteread's exhibition at Tate Britain, and was suitably overcome with existential loneliness, triggered by the ruminations on grief and absence. Then he went to McDonald's for a burger.



ROSIE HILDER
OPERATIONS EDITOR

Rosie enjoyed the BIAs. Triumphs included not tweeting winners before they were announced, not falling over as she collected Anagrama's award, and seeing her periods column in print. But she did spill unspecified Chinese food juice on her dress at 3am.

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

GARETH JONES
VIDEO PRODUCER

Gareth enjoyed filming (and indulging) in the BIAs last month, and visited Celloglas once again for an exciting cover video exploring the wonders of phosphorescent ink. He's also still waiting patiently for his own illustrated portrait in the mag.

TOM MAY
FREELANCE WRITER

Tom has been on a press tour of Sweden, and now knows more about Scandinavian wallpaper than he ever thought possible. He recently joined a home swap service, and plans to become a digital nomad next year with a month in Australia.

Production notes

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William Gibbons

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P3-74: Ultra Mag Plus Gloss 90gsm
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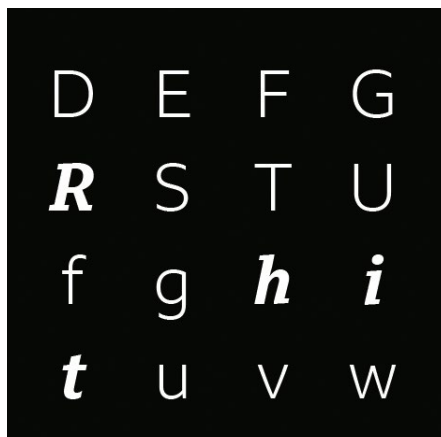
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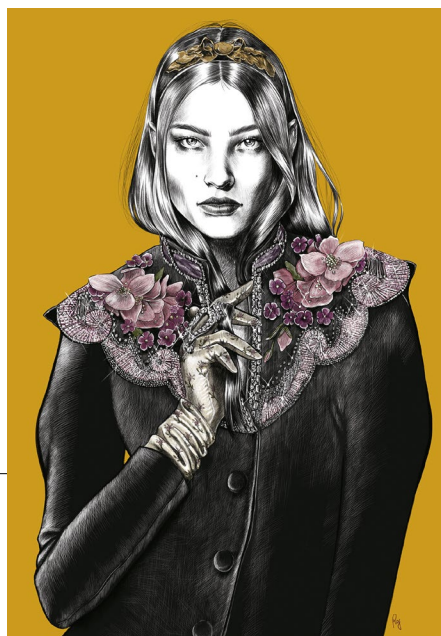


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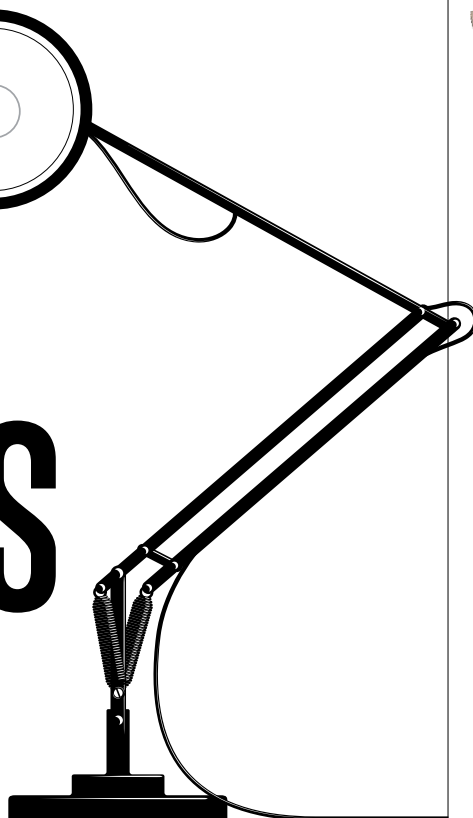
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CULTURE

TRENDS

PEOPLE

EVENTS

INSPIRATION

Each month, our Trends section is curated by experienced
creative consultancy FranklinTill www.franklintill.com



TRENDS

NEW TERRAZZO

No longer the exclusive domain of stone, terrazzo's decorative pattern is now being applied to unconventional materials. Often employing waste matter, designers are playing with different composites to create playful patterns that speak of the materials' former origins



DEPOSIT BY ODD MATTER

The Deposit series of benches showcases a cohesive system of material renewability, while keeping abreast of changing trends. Each piece is encrusted with deposits from its previous form, proposing new ways to reclaim old elements while breathing new life into its material composition.

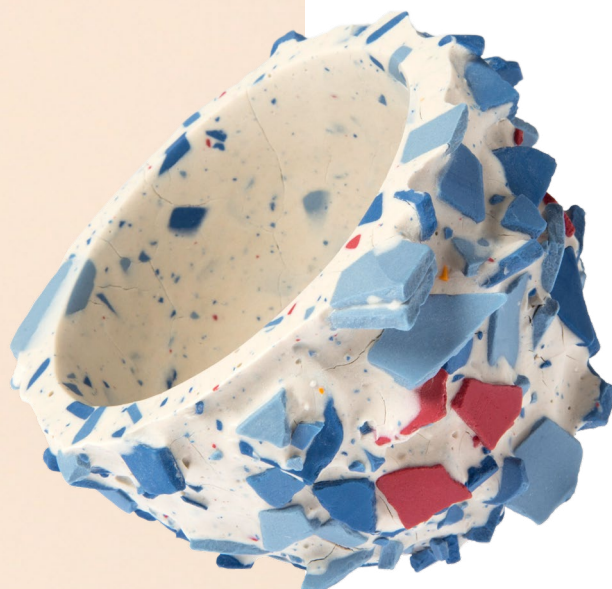
www.oddmatterstudio.com

GROGGED VESSELS

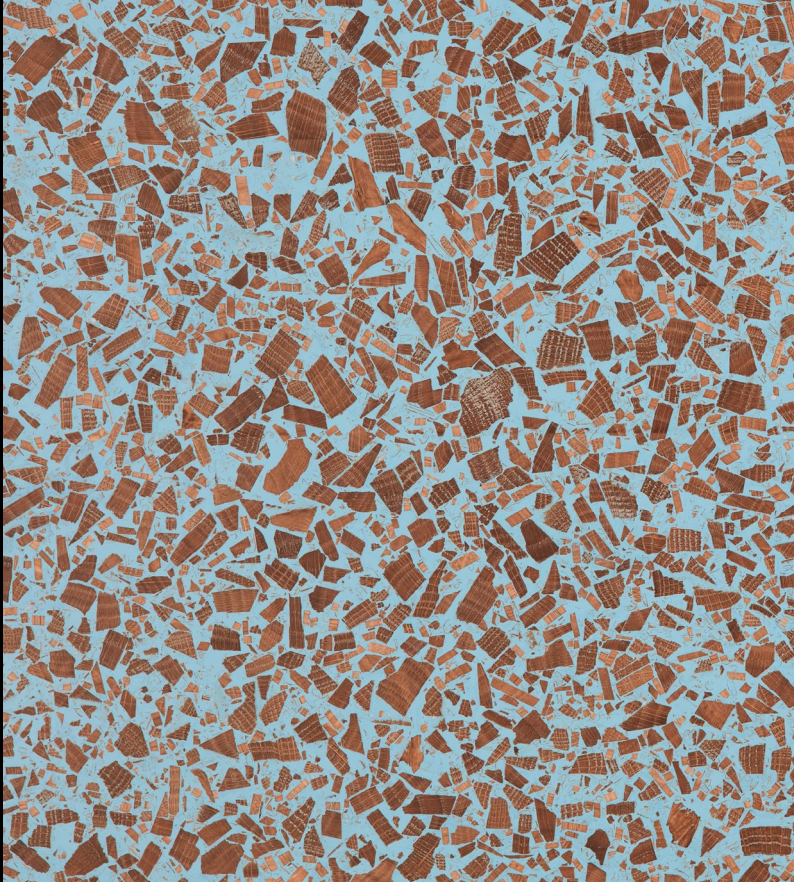
BY SEVAK ZARGARIAN

Sevak Zargarian intersects craft elements with industrial techniques to create her decorative vessels. Various randomised fragments of pigment-stained porcelain lend uniqueness to each and every piece.

www.sevakzargarian.com



PHOTOGRAPHY: Yashen Venema



PHOTOGRAPHY: Luke A Walker

AZURE MONO BY FORESSO

Inspired by an appreciation of timber's rich and natural grain, Foresso's Azure Mono injects qualities of Venetian marble into a hardwearing surface design with mosaic-like ornamentation. Made from meticulously sourced reclaimed oak, polished to reveal tiny pores, the work is a curious amalgamation of old and new elements.

www.foresso.co.uk

**MELTING POT TABLE
BY DIRK VANDER KOOIJ**

Recycled plastic is melted and reshaped to contour the Melting Pot table. Each piece is a unique blend of reclaimed synthetic material that boasts indestructible strength. Melting Pot showcases the random patterns generated by the production process and bold, rustic colour patterns.

www.dirkvanderkooij.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: Jonathan Middleton

**NEXUS BY ZUZA MENGHAM**

Nexus is Zuza Mengham's first foray into furniture. Her Z-shaped chair is handcast in resin; its birch-ply core refashions a terrazzo-styled material more commonly associated with flooring. She peppers a grey base with chunky configurations of irregular shapes, giving capricious life to an inanimate object.

www.zuzamengham.com

FRANKLINTILL STUDIO**Design Futures / Material Futures / Colour Futures**

FranklinTill Studio is a forecasting agency and creative consultancy that works with lifestyle brands across the disciplinary spectrum to provide research-based insights that drive creative innovations in materials, colour and design. It creates reports, publications, exhibitions and events with the aim of making its research both accessible and inspiring. It also edits and produces two magazines, published by View Publications, which you can buy from www.viewpoint-magazine.com.

VIEWPOINT DESIGN

Viewpoint delivers visual, editorial and statistical information to brands, designers, agencies and consumer insight teams determined to create lifestyle products, campaigns and environments that anticipate consumer demand. Written by professionals in the branding and design business, each issue explores how a significant trend will impact consumer behaviour and the global design landscape.

VIEWPOINT COLOUR

Launched December 2016, Viewpoint Colour offers visual inspiration, design direction and a global perspective on colour. The inaugural issue provides an in-depth analysis of the personality traits of emerging colour stories, explaining why they are relevant now and how they are currently being applied.



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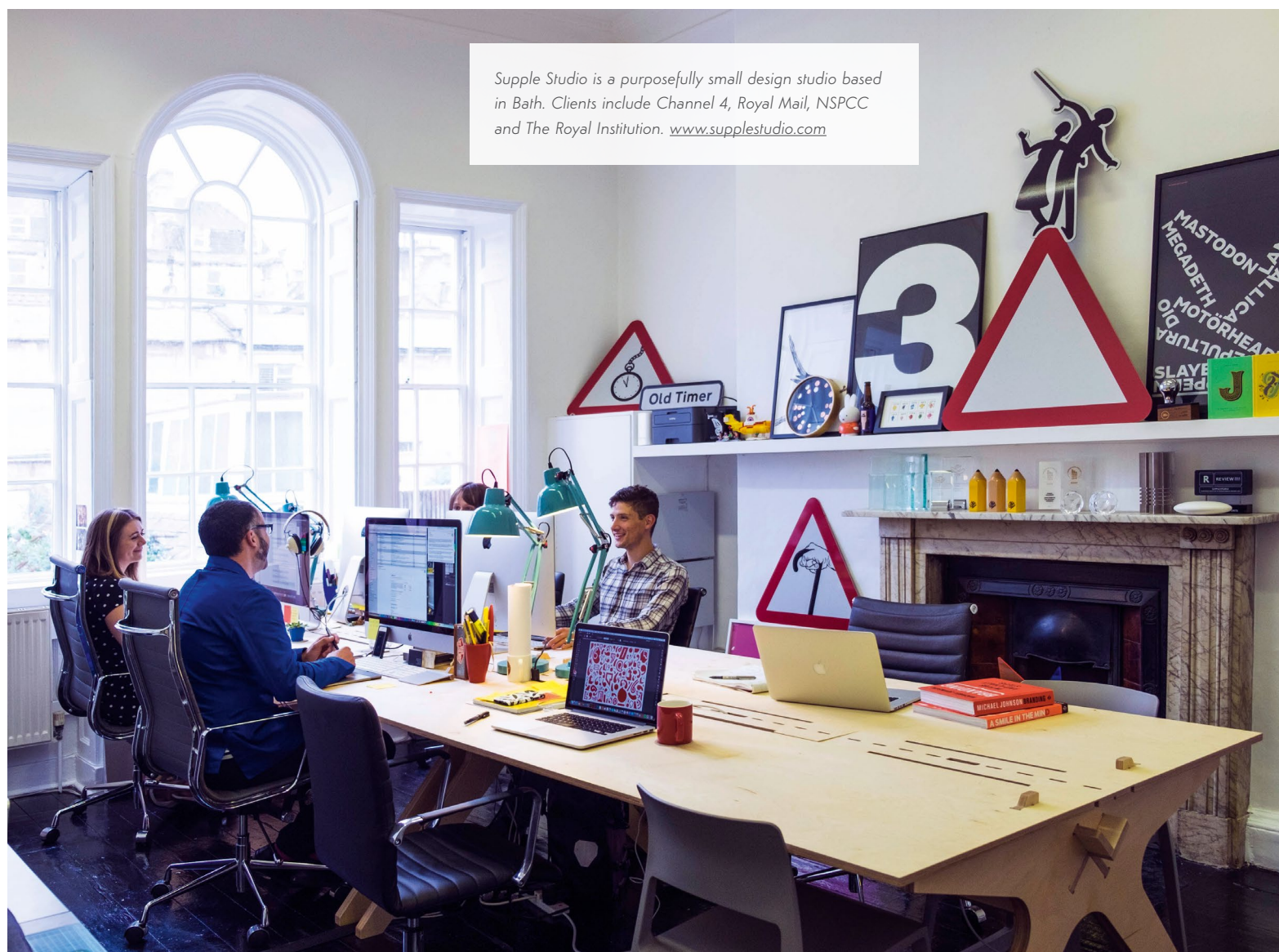


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MY DESIGN SPACE HAS...

HISTORIC CREATIVE CREDENTIALS

Founder of Bath's **Supple Studio**, Jamie Ellul reveals his hopes for carrying on the space's artistic tradition

Spread over three floors, Supple Studio's new space is in a Grade II listed Georgian terrace in the heart of Bath. The studio has all the period features you'd expect: incredibly high ceilings, a marble fireplace and beautiful sash windows that let light in on even the dullest of days.

In contrast to the historic setting, Supple Studio has opted for quite modernist furniture. "This creates a lovely clash with the Georgian

features of the space," says studio founder Jamie Ellul.

The building also has its own creative history. "We found out it was originally the home of Prince Hoare — an artist, playwright and son of William Hoare the famous Georgian portrait artist," explains Ellul. "It's inspiring to be in a studio space with such historic creative credentials. I hope we can carry on the tradition."

As a moving-in present to themselves, the team bought a

Beatles Yellow Submarine Lego set (1). "We're all big music lovers and this symbolises that love, as well as our sense of play," says Ellul.

This playfulness is also present in the studio's Mr Men stamps (2). "These are the first set of stamps we designed so they have a special place in our hearts," explains Ellul.

Also on the mantelpiece is Ellul's Time Is Money clock (3). "This is a personal project that's been kicking around as an idea for a while," he explains. "It was featured in

an exhibition called After Hours. I made this pimped gold and black version when we moved in."

Ellul won a bid on George Hardie's old people crossing sign (4), which formed part of NB Studio's Sign of the Times exhibition.

Before founding Supple, Ellul made his name at Magpie, which he co-founded. "This TypoCircle poster (5) is a lovely reminder of my old studio, and career highlight of being invited to speak at TypoCircle in 2012," smiles Ellul. ■



1



2



3



4



5



Versatile creative Kyle Wilkinson is equally at home with graphic or product design, and also designed our distinctive Brand Impact Awards trophies.

NEW VENTURES

A FRESH START

British designer **Kyle Wilkinson** reveals his motivation behind setting up his new studio, and how to detangle from old partnerships

Keeping the creative fire stoked is a challenge for designers. Award-winning, Yorkshire-based designer Kyle Wilkinson reveals how launching Wilkinson&Co. has injected new enthusiasm into his love for typography and graphic design, as does splitting his time between the agency and nurturing his rising stardom as a product designer.

Tell us more about your new venture...

I share my time between Wilkinson&Co. – where we work with clients on positioning, launching and building brands through a variety of platforms – and a product design studio under my own name, where I design furniture and homeware products as well as client commissions, such as CA's Brand Impact Awards trophies. I've just launched my first furniture collection at the London Design Festival, which was great fun.

Why did you decide to go separate ways from your partner at Hacksaw?

Unfortunately, after six years the motivation and passion had started to leave the other partners within the business. Whilst still commercially successful, it became quite clear that the forward drive had depleted. Whilst a tough and sad decision, I couldn't continue to go down that path.

How do you envisage your new studio being different from the old one?

I'm taking it back to our roots. We had success with our ideas and approach, so it wasn't as though the old model was broken,

just the motivation – and my motivation and fire has only increased.

What are the legal implications of splitting from a former partner?

This depends on the director's agreement you have in place. Ours gave quite simple instructions to what would do if the unthinkable were to happen. We made sure things were kept simple, so that friendships would remain and not go sour, which is something I'd certainly recommend when starting a partnership.

What advice would you give to someone considering making a similar move?

Be upfront and use your mouth and, most importantly, your ears. Don't be afraid of the hard, honest conversations; yes they are difficult, but they're necessary. Like all relationships, talking helps and you can fix problems before they develop. As your business will go through inevitable periods of uncertainty and challenge, the easiest way to solve any problem is to talk.

What sort of projects are you hoping to work on?

I'd like a variety of projects through the door, work that adds value to a brand and strengthens its offering to its audience. It could be anything from full branding and strategy, right down to a new bespoke typeface for a preexisting brand, something we've done twice recently for two vodka brands. As long as it isn't boring and it challenges us, I don't mind. ▣

INSIGHT

Strong opinion and analysis from across the global design industry



CRAIG OLDHAM
FOUNDER, OFFICE
OF CRAIG OLDHAM
www.craigoldham.co.uk

Craig is a designer, educator, writer, publisher, curator, letter-writer, website-putter-upper and lamenter. He's also the founder of eponymous practice, Office of Craig. Recent projects include ME & EU and Larkin: New Eyes Each Year.



MATT BAXTER
CREATIVE DIRECTOR
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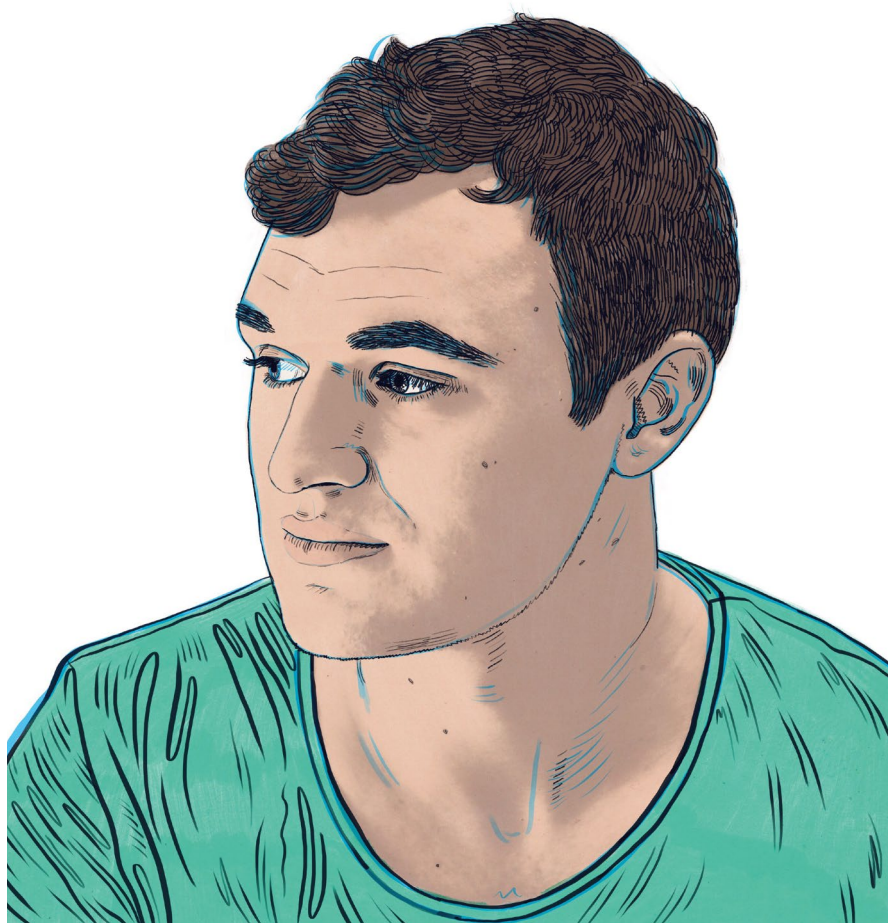
Matt is creative director of award-winning brand design studio Baxter and Bailey, based in Brighton. On page 19, he argues that a certain four-letter word is due for reappraisal. It's safe to say that it's probably not the word you're thinking of.

DESIGN MATTERS: How has Brexit affected your decisions about where to live and work? – page 18

PLUS: Three views on DixonBaxi's rebrand of Eurosport's Olympic coverage – page 20

Illustrations:
Anna Higgle
www.annahiggle.co.uk

ESSAY



We need to break rank

UK Studio Rankings panellist **Craig Oldham** questions whether the design industry needs to reappraise its definition of 'studio'

When asked by the lovely Computer Arts to vote for its annual UK Studio Rankings I was, at first, happy to oblige. Only when I actually started to give it some serious thought did a seemingly simple exercise become a struggle.

The panel was asked to pick our top five studios in ascending order, with bonus points for our fave outside London – to even things up, as I understood. But when thinking a bit more on my picks, I found it an increasingly difficult thing to do. If plucking five names out of my recent memory wasn't tricky enough, thinking ahead to whether I might genuinely believe the overall results from this collective process, well that was downright crippling.

After further introspection, and a bit of naval gazing, I concluded that I was struggling for many reasons. Mainly, there was one thing: an admission that I really don't know what constitutes a studio anymore. And I'm not sure the industry does either.

The design industry has always been bereft of terminology. It suffers tremendously from abused adjectives and deficient definitions, all of which hold us back in the way we practice and develop. And I started to ask, what actually constitutes a studio? What's the difference between a studio and, say, an agency? Or a design consultancy, or design practice? Hell, even a design company? The flippant smart-arse in me instantly coughed the riposte: "Just different nouns that follow the word 'design'." But is there really a difference? And does it really matter?

An afternoon straw-poll on Twitter seemed to pitch the differences on three main variances: size, structure and fees. It seems that perception puts the studio as a small operation, doing more of a singular thing – it's more crafty and bespoke. The agency is apparently bigger, and it pulls in talent (sometimes even studios) to do its bidding on whatever bigger task is at hand. The consultancy, practice, or company, appears to be a more unknown quantity, but is seemingly much more serious. Perhaps that's because you might order the aforementioned list in the same way when it comes to the amount they bill – the studio being relatively cheap compared to the consultant's price tag, which is more considerable.

These perceptions played on me when I was thinking through my list, and I started to use them almost as a yard stick for the exercise. I discounted many because they didn't fit my newly set bill for what a 'studio' was, and discarded some great work because it was done by one designer, or a big network, or an agency, or some other entity. And just as these definitions became a hindrance to my list making, I'm almost certain they further strangle us as an industry, unconsciously or otherwise.

I wonder if some of the truly great things happening (work included) are actually being done

outside of these recognised models we default to. Many of the studios and agencies on the Studio Rankings in past years are the same usual suspects, which really did start to worry me to be honest. It feels like a misrepresentation of where the industry is, what's going on within it and, more importantly, where it's moving. It's almost as if we're an industry in denial, wanting to perpetuate a myth that only certain or established models can, and are, doing good work and garnering reputation amongst peers. All the while, the models of operation – large, multinational network agency at one end, then everything down to the small one-person-band at the other, with in-house setups not even getting a look-in – are stretching further apart. It isn't, I feel, fully representative of the industry at present.

If you look at 90 per cent of studio, agency or company websites in our game, they're all keen to define themselves as 'more than just a design [whatever]'.

But what does that actually mean? Couple this with the endless studio rankings, creative surveys, top 100s and most-awarded lists, and a hidden insecurity in our industry starts to emerge. We are all superbly insecure in ourselves, and our roles.

The size of a creative operation, how it's set up and what it bills, should have no bearing on its creative potential, or its impact and recognition by the industry.

Bigger is not always better. That goes for number of people, offices, or noughts on the bank balance. Nor does great creative work have to come from an authorised creative area. More and more, I am seeing interesting and imaginative things happen outside the established models. I can only view our insistence on retaining and congratulating ourselves on our well-set silos as futile and counter-productive.

I am more than aware of my own bias – you're probably thinking I sound like someone who isn't on the list, so wants a self-justifying moan. But for an industry riddled with problems of gender, diversity, pay, social, political and environmental issues, we can't continue with set minds and set ways.

Perpetuating our own myths and pretending that our problems will sort themselves out won't cut it. We have to find new offers and newer ways of doing things, because we all depend on that. And if not for your industry, do it for your ranking. ■

Is our definition of 'studio' holding us back? Tweet your thoughts to @ComputerArts using #DesignMatters

The size of a creative operation, how it's set up and what it bills should have no bearing on its creative potential, or its impact and recognition by the industry. Bigger is not always better

DISCUSSION

How is Brexit affecting your decisions about where to live and work?

**KAZ KAPUSNIAK**

Freelance graphic designer
and branding consultant

www.twitter.com/letmeseethatkaz



"After the Brexit vote, I decided to go through the long process of getting Polish citizenship. As someone born in the UK but with a Polish grandfather, I've always been entitled to it, but never thought I'd need it until 24 June.

I've spent years working towards becoming freelance and one of the driving forces for this was to have the flexibility to work anywhere.

Now I'm freelance, several of my clients are based in Belgium and Germany, and it would be a threat to my business if I could no longer work with them. There's enough doubt about where we'll be after the UK leaves that I felt I had to secure my EU citizenship to enable me to continue working with these clients."

**ROCHELLE DANCEL**

Experience strategist, Randomly
www.eversorandomly.com



"Despite having the option of living in the EU my whole life, it wasn't until Brexit that I seriously thought about living between two countries. Being based in London, I'm lucky to work on projects that are global. Being able to work in the EU without having to secure a visa is a huge plus, and it would put me at a disadvantage if that was no longer the case. I'm currently looking at what my options are for setting up a base somewhere start-up-friendly, like Berlin, and then continuing to work remotely, especially for brands that will move their business outside of the UK. I anticipate that the big agencies will struggle to replace the work on their rosters, especially in the short term."

**ROB BARRETT**

Freelance graphic designer
and illustrator

www.rob-barrett.com



"For years, I'd had it in the back of my head that I'd love to move to Berlin. Being a freelancer, I knew I could pick up and move anywhere, but I never quite got around to doing it. So for me, Brexit was somewhat of a double-edged sword. It was the final push that I needed to make the jump and move to Germany while I could still do it easily, but at the same time, it's the agent that might mean I can't stay indefinitely. The uncertainty is the worst part of Brexit for me right now: not knowing what will happen in March 2019, whether

I should take on any long-term leases, and if I'll be able to stay here without a 'proper job' to back me up."

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**@BENILLUSTRATOR**

Brexit is giving my wife and I a strong reason to move back to Australia. I'm also looking for more business in safer economies abroad.

**@_SUPER_HELPFUL**

I'm married to an American and seeking citizenship. I grew up in London, but it feels like it would cut off my career if we moved back!

**@GUITARISTDOM**

I spent a lot of time working in Amsterdam and felt I might live there one day. I feel that's unlikely unless I go now, which is not really realistic.

**@PH_ANIMATION**

Luckily Norwegians aren't affected by Brexit as bad as other Scandinavians, but I did consider moving just in case it turns on us later on.

**ADAM LOCY**

Why would it affect anything? If anything it would make working in the UK easier since there will be less regulations imposed by the EU.

COLUMN



The power of nice

Is there a more maligned word in the English language than 'nice'?

Yes, I'm sure you can think of a few. And please do try and keep the fruitier ones to yourself – this is an all-ages magazine, for goodness' sake. But

here's the thing. Aside from perhaps 'neat' and (whisper

it) 'cool', I can't think of another seemingly innocuous word as roundly reviled as nice. This word is widely considered the crown prince of meaningless platitudes. For many, 'nice' is a bland shrug of a word that evokes pastel colours and non-committal opinion.

And just to avoid any confusion here, this isn't an article about Nice, the fifth most populous city in France. Which, come to think of it, also evokes pastel colours and, I don't know, open-top sports cars? Nor, for the avoidance of doubt, am I writing about Nice, the vaguely coconut-flavoured, roughly rectangular, sugar-sprinkled biscuit, which is in no way reviled. Certainly not in our studio.

No, I'm writing about nice, the humble and much demonised adjective, which, according to the Oxford English Dictionary means 'giving pleasure or satisfaction; pleasant or attractive'. And in many contexts, this demonisation is quite right. After all, who wants their nine-month-long brand identity project to be reviewed on launch as nice? Stunning, certainly. Genius, yes please. Gob-smacking, most definitely. But nice? It's not quite the linguistic high five you were hoping for after all those days, weeks and months of blood, sweat and toil. In this context, the word nice might as well be a devastatingly deployed 'meh'.

According to **Matt Baxter**, creative director of Brighton-based Baxter and Bailey, a certain four-letter word is due a reappraisal

However, I'd argue that nice – in certain contexts – has a power all of its own. For example, if you take a moment to read some of the client comments on our website, you'll probably notice that a theme emerges. Nearly everyone says how nice Baxter and Bailey is to work with.

Now, you might think 'nice to work with' sounds a bit innocuous, but for us it's the highest praise because we see being good creative collaborators as the very essence of what we do.

Almost always, the branding projects we take on are challenging and pressurised with a lot at stake. Our clients are, invariably, pretty demanding; they want nothing less than great creative ideas based on rock-solid strategic foundations. For most projects, creative specialists – photographers, illustrators, film-makers – need to be brought on board and effectively managed to do their best work. Deadlines are, more often than not, tight. (Sometimes budgets, too.) Projects grow arms and legs as they progress, unexpected curveballs are thrown into the mix at the eleventh hour. Tensions are high. Reputations are on the line.

If, at the end of a project, our client feels that working with Baxter and Bailey has been a pleasure, we know that – on every count – we must have done a pretty good job. If, after all of that tension and pressure, after all of those arms and legs, our client can describe us as nice, we feel a great sense of accomplishment. Because that means they'll be more likely to work with us again and that's when the best work happens – long-lasting client relationships built on trust, experience and delivery. And niceness.

REBRAND FOCUS



Focus on: Eurosport Olympic identity

We critique DixonBaxi's new branding for Eurosport's Olympics coverage from three different perspectives



DAN CAPSTICK
Creative director, DixonBaxi
www.dixonbaxi.com



MATTHEW ROOP
Design intern, Lippincott
www.matthewroop.com



SALMAN ANJUM
Head of design, The Institute
for Optimum Nutrition
www.salman.org.uk

"Our identity unites two iconic sporting organisations, putting Eurosport's ongoing commitment to be the 'Home of the Olympics' at the heart of the brand.

"The Podium' is the foundation for the brand experience on every platform. The iconic three tiers are used as a simple visual metaphor in hundreds of ways. Layers of vibrant colour (inspired by Olympic venues) and expressive typography create a flexible and distinctive graphic style that is inspired by the ultimate ambition of elite athletes to be the best.

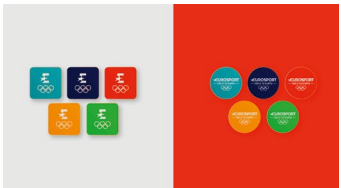
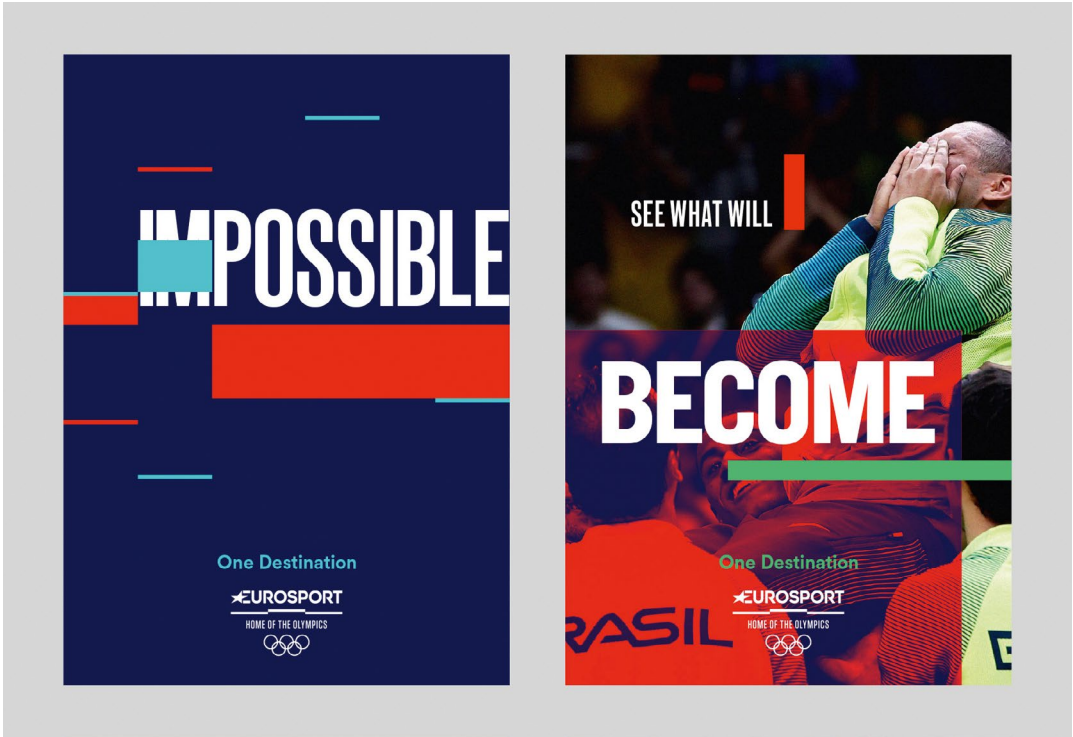
In print and digital applications, the design language flexes dramatically. Along with type and highly curated photography, the look is modern with a strong graphic aesthetic. In motion, The Podium has a positive, upwards motion, creating a unique behaviour that becomes an integral part of the brand attitude."

"It's difficult to properly critique a TV branding project before you've been able to watch the material living on the channel. Ultimately, I think this is a common problem with design criticism: too often do we judge things out of context and from outside of the client/designer conversation. That said, this branding project manages to pull together multiple different logos into a really strong, cohesive system. As a static lockup, it is good – in motion, it looks great. This is important for a TV brand, where a flexible system with well-considered motion and typography is just as important (if not more so) than a static logo. My only issue is that in terms of colour palette and smooth, colourful motion, the project looks a lot like Premier League, a previous DixonBaxi project."

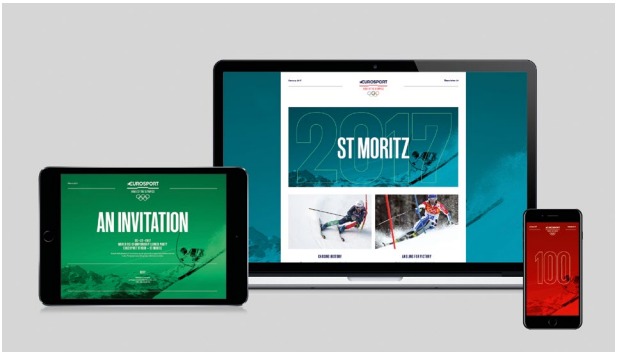
"DixonBaxi's solution focuses on the ascent to the podium, which is what every athlete at the Olympics (and the watching public) dreams of. The results have a great energy, stand out against other broadcasters, and are instantly understood by viewers. This is most apparent in the motion design and on-screen graphics.

The attention to detail is, as usual, great. Some commentators have complained that the podium should have three distinct levels; however, the Olympics podium is actually at two levels, as reflected in the logo.

What I find most appealing about the design is how it combines two very different entities and philosophies – Eurosport and Olympics – into something not only cohesive but forward-thinking. This high-quality design solution, along with DixonBaxi's recent output, show it to be one of today's leading agencies."



In print, a series of iconic posters and merchandise that feel collectable expand the use of DixonBaxi's design system with strong patterns and bold use of colour. A bespoke type family, consisting of Eurosport 3, 5 (pictured) and 7 was created in collaboration with A2-Type.



SHOWCASE

Computer Arts selects the hottest new
design, illustration and motion work
from the global design scene



Annua



FLOWING RIBBONS

D&AD ANNUAL 2017

by Studio Sutherland

www.studio-sutherland.co.uk

D&AD president Bruce Duckworth invited Studio Sutherland founder Jim Sutherland to design this year's D&AD Annual, which launched in September. Featuring a stripped-back, minimalist design to refocus readers on the work inside, it also contains 10 ribbons in different colours that reflect the D&AD Pencils, letting people flag the work that most inspires them.

"Spines are the most 'seen' part of a book when it's on a shelf and they are often neglected – so I liked the idea

of using the ribbon-width stripes boldly on the spine," says Sutherland. "The colour ribbons then really feel like they are flowing out of the book itself."

He continues: "I was equally terrified and honoured to be asked to design it in the first place. Seeing the finished annual on my shelf – next to the other historic annuals – in the studio, replete with flowing ribbons hanging over the shelf edge, was an amazing moment."





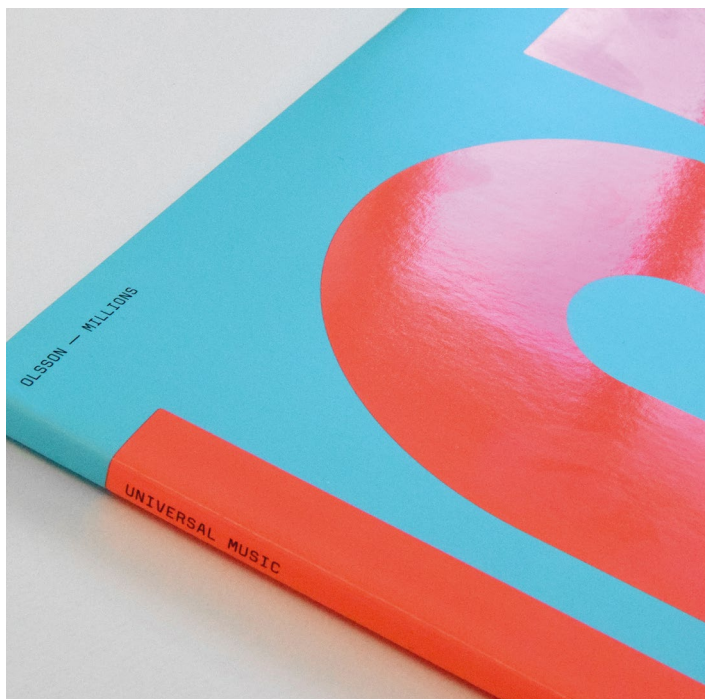
● Bruce Duckworth and Jim Sutherland brought the D&AD ampersand inside the annual to link all the categories. A Pencil acts as a dash, while the dots are all shaped as hexagons to echo D&AD's logo.

● ● Convincing the printer and finisher to attach 10 ribbons was more technically complex than Sutherland had imagined. "Two or three seems to be the usual limit, but they rose to the challenge beautifully."

● ● ● Duckworth and Sutherland were keen to do something simple and classic for the 2017 Annual. Initial ideas ranged from ampersand experiments to equating inspiration with being struck by lightning.

● ● ● ● "The real challenge for me was designing a book that didn't overwhelm the work inside," says Sutherland.





90S TECHNICOLOUR

OLSSON'S MILLIONS DOUBLE ALBUM

by the Designers Republic

www.thedesignersrepublic.com

Songwriter Chris Olsson approached the Designers Republic (tDR) a year ago about material for his new releases: two physical singles, two digital singles and an album. They developed a logo reducing Olsson to O/N to reference 90s Detroit techno collective Underground Resistance, a moodboard inspiration, and "went back to the days of fluoro-tDR" to reference the sunshine sound, says Ian Anderson.

"Essentially, the brief we developed was to create and evolve a

typographic-based, simple and cost-effective identity that would be easily applicable and ownable across all media from packaging to digital, and from social media to street promo and merchandise," continues Anderson. "Every cover and image across all media is the repetition of the O/N logo. On the singles, it's black on fluoro backgrounds. Chris really wanted us to recapture the technicolour spirit of 90s tDR, which we were happy to immerse ourselves in again."



ADVENTUROUS TASTES

ARTISAN BRANDING

by lg2

www.lg2.com

When Québec-based microbrewery Boréale launched a new series of beer, Artisan, it tasked creative agency lg2 with designing the new identity. "The client's main objective was to restore the brand's credibility among fans of microbrews," explains graphic designer Marie-Pier Gilbert. "We had to establish Boréale in a niche segment without detracting from its mass appeal."

lg2 worked hand-in-hand with the master brewer. For some products, the recipe influenced the artistic direction; in other cases, the reverse happened. "For example, for the Pilsner des Mers, the name and design were developed first, which then inspired the master brewer to give the recipe a salty note," says Gilbert. "Flexibility and listening were a big part of the teamwork."





EXPLORING 3D

UCA PROSPECTUS 2018

by Spin

www.spin.co.uk

London-based studio Spin has rolled out the second phase of its identity system for the University for the Creative Arts (UCA), based in the southeast of England.

The visual language introduces dimension through isometric letters, numerals and symbols rendered in a variety of complex and simple shapes, while the evolved colour palette feels progressive and forward-thinking, but

still maintains a connection to UCA's original identity. "The early iterations were based in two dimensions, and it was a good opportunity to explore the third dimension," explains creative director Tony Brook.

"My favourite part is the extent to which the isometrics were developed," he adds. "They are a very distinctive and powerful graphic language."



SPELLBINDING STORIES

THE GROTYLN TRAILER

by Moth Studio

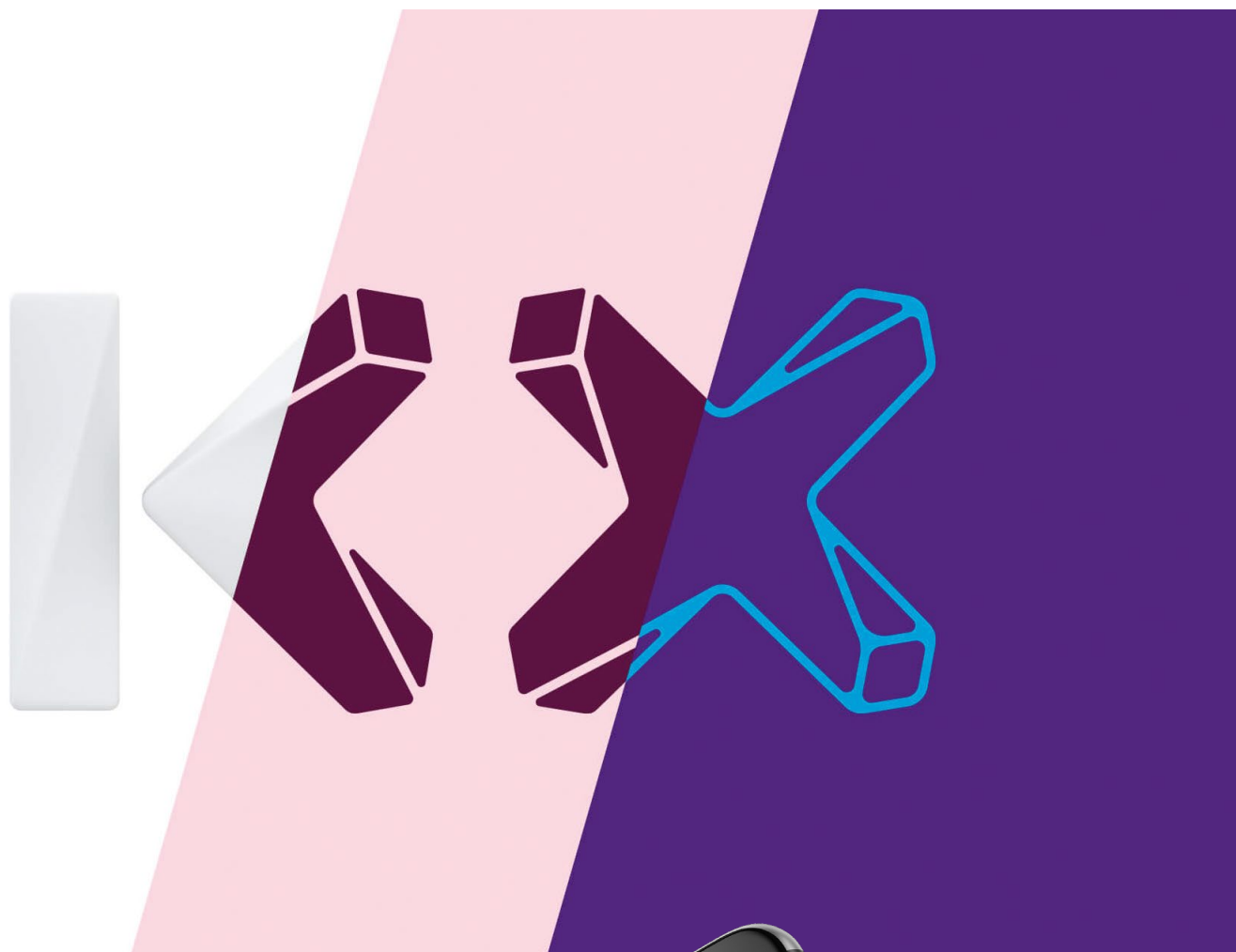
www.moth.studio

Moth Studio rarely works with designers outside the team, but when author and illustrator Benji Davies approached them to make a trailer for his newest book *The Grotlyn*, the studio couldn't say no. "We find his aesthetic very compatible with what we produce here, plus his characters are adorable and a joy to animate," explains creative director and co-founder Dave Prosser.

Moth worked closely with Davies and Harper Collins to strike a balance between giving a flavour of the story without spoiling the ending of the book. This proved to be tricky – the book is a little creepy in places and the team worried about putting off parents who wanted to buy it for their children.

"We liked the idea of keeping the camera constantly moving from one scene to the next to help the flow of the voiceover," says Prosser. "It's also Benji's first rhyming children's book, so we thought it would be nice to keep the words written on-screen as the camera moves throughout the shots."





ALL CHANGE

KING'S CROSS REBRAND

by SomeOne

www.someoneinlondon.com

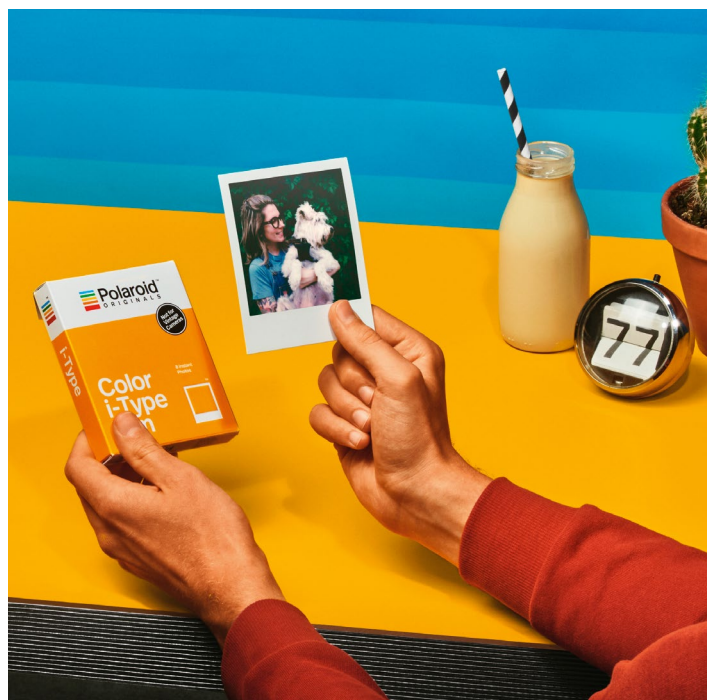
SomeOne worked with property developer Argent, local residents and retailers to create a new branding system for London's "most exciting creative quarter" – King's Cross.

Home to a diverse range of brands, institutions and events – including Google's cutting-edge tech, Central Saint Martins' world-class creativity, and international food and drink – King's Cross needed a way to bring these different stories together.

"Rather than develop fixed assets we opted for an adaptive system that features clear, helpful iconography and wayfinding," says creative partner Laura Hussey. "This includes a new bespoke typeface from the London-based Colophon foundry."

The ghost signs found around the King's Cross neighbourhood formed the basis for this new typeface, adds design director Karl Randall. "It's both signature in its look, and historic in its references," he adds.





RETRO CHARM

POLAROID ORIGINALS BRANDING

by Polaroid Originals

<https://uk.polaroidoriginals.com>

Briefed to reconnect one of the most iconic brands in the world – Polaroid – with a new brand dedicated to analogue instant photography, the Polaroid Originals design team focused on striking a balance between retro and contemporary.

"Our main goal was to pay tribute to the legacy of Polaroid while creating something new and fresh in its own right," explains Danny Pemberton, creative director at Polaroid Originals.

After digging through the Polaroid archives in search of old ads for inspiration, the team crafted a broad graphic system with the flexibility to cover a wide range of products. The two-tone camera illustration style gives a nod to 1960s art director Paul Giambarba, who introduced the colour stripes to Polaroid's visual identity, while Erik Spiekermann's FF Real typeface brings a dash of old-school charm. "The debossed frame on the front of the film packs is my favourite detail," adds Pemberton.

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FOUR PATHS INTO FREELANCE LIFE

Is a long run-up better, or can a push be a blessing in disguise? **Julia Sagar** explores four different paths into self-employment

ILLUSTRATIONS: Michelle Thompson www.michelle-thompson.com

Enter any decent co-working space or trendy coffee shop and you'll see them. Armed with a laptop, mobile and very little else, an army of freelancers is quietly revolutionising the creative industry.

According to the Design Council's 2015 Design Economy Report, 27.1 per cent of designers are self-employed, which is almost twice the UK average. Within graphic design, those figures are even higher, with a whopping 48.1 per cent of people self-employed. In the US, the numbers are higher still.

The gig economy has never looked better but try telling yourself that when you're considering making the leap. The fear of the unknown can be crippling: will you be able to find work, pay the bills, stay motivated? Are you too old – or too young? How should you prepare?

Here, we take a look at four routes into freelance life. We speak to designers and illustrators who have taken these paths and harvest their pro advice to ensure you enter the world of freelance successfully – whichever route you choose.







Go freelance straight from education

According to Dave Chaplin, CEO and founder of freelancer organisation Contractor Calculator, graduates are increasingly setting up on their own after university. In a competitive industry, working freelance can offer more immediate employment than waiting for the perfect studio role, and with clients increasingly recognising the benefits of a younger, fresh perspective, there are plenty of opportunities out there – if you know where to look.

For Dutch art director, illustrator and designer Mart Biemans, the prospect was so appealing that he quit his studies before graduating. He'd been freelancing since the age of 14 and felt he wasn't learning enough at school. "The career route I took isn't something I would advise, unless you're extremely confident that you can make it work," he warns. "I struggled a lot after quitting school. Some months I didn't have any projects to work on and no money was coming in."

In the early days, Biemans took on every job he could. "From designing key visuals to doing business cards for local bars, I didn't have the luxury to be picky and simply wanted to be able to make a living from what I love doing," he says.

At first, he found work by emailing companies to see if they needed a designer ("I was happy if I got a reply from one in 10 companies"). He was also extremely active

on platforms like DeviantArt and Behance: Biemans wasn't just creating and sharing art, but also giving feedback to others – and listening to the feedback he received. The more followers he garnered, the quicker big brands like Pepsi, Diesel and Universal Music Group started noticing him – and from that moment on, it was an upwards spiral.

One problem with taking this route into freelance life can be a lack of experience on the legal side of things. Although most clients were kind, Biemans learned the intricacies of contracts, invoicing and NDAs the hard way. "Once a client didn't pay me because no contracts were signed," he recalls. "It's just a matter of learning from your mistakes. Don't let those events happen again."

Freelance designer Guy Rodwell agrees. He went freelance straight after college and advises understanding the tax system and fully researching the different options for setting up a business before making the leap. He's never been more busy but says the biggest hurdle he's still tackling is overbooking himself. "I've had a brilliant time so far working for myself. But I often underestimate the time it takes to complete my work, and jobs and deadlines can quite easily stack up," he says, adding that an understanding of your limits as a freelancer is important.

He's right. Clients want to hire someone who will deliver brilliant results by the given deadline. They also want a designer with the right skills. Without access to the level of training you might receive in a studio, you need to find other ways to stay ahead. Rodwell recommends taking on smaller jobs to help learn new techniques or the basics of new software, and Biemans advises experimenting to keep your skills up to date.

"It's very important to keep educating yourself," he points out. "Things change so quickly. Programmes like Photoshop and Illustrator get amazing new features with almost every single update and you'd be a fool to keep doing the thing you've always done, instead of trying them out."

"I DIDN'T HAVE THE LUXURY TO BE PICKY AT FIRST, I SIMPLY WANTED TO MAKE A LIVING FROM WHAT I LOVE DOING"

MART BIEMANS ART DIRECTOR, ILLUSTRATOR AND DESIGNER





“GET A BUSINESS ACCOUNT SET UP STRAIGHT AWAY. YOU CAN LINK THAT ACCOUNT TO A SERVICE LIKE FREEAGENT TO HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR FINANCES”

JACK DALY FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR



2 Quit your design job

One of the most sensible routes into self-employed life is to test the water first. Slowly taking on out-of-hours freelance work with the financial security of a full-time job enables you to experience freelance life first-hand and make an educated decision about whether it's right for you.

UK-based freelance illustrator Jack Daly took the plunge into self-employment after being approached by a New York-based agent, who offered to represent him. He'd been dabbling in illustration while working as a senior designer at Glasgow-based creative agency D8 and accepted the offer. After about six months of representation

GET MORE FROM DESIGN EDUCATION

READY YOURSELF FOR FREELANCE LIFE BY MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR STUDIES

01 USE YOUR TIME WISELY

“My biggest tip for students looking to become freelancers is to use your time studying wisely,” says freelance designer Guy Rodwell. “Experiment with all the equipment, and take time to learn new processes and techniques that might aid and inform your design process once you become a freelancer. Having the knowledge to produce creative and varied work is very handy.”

02 LEARN AT YOUR PACE

It's good advice to get used to deadlines and develop skills like self-motivation while you're studying. “When you're still in school, you can take it slow and learn the important aspects of freelance and design at your own pace,” says illustrator and designer Mart Biemans. “Once I quit school, there wasn't a way back for me. Succeeding was my only option so I had to adapt and learn very fast,” he recalls.

03 NAG YOUR TUTORS

“If you have any particular design weaknesses, nag your tutors,” says Rodwell. “Tutors are there to help you improve and be the best you can. Make sure they teach you what you need to know to prepare yourself for the world of work.”

04 GET WORK EXPERIENCE

Your tutors and lecturers can also help with arranging work experience. “Many of my college tutors had connections with local agencies and companies, and were very happy to refer students and set up placements or other work opportunities,” says Rodwell. “Get involved with any internal campaigns at your college, too. Gaining experience is really important.”

05 BUILD A CONTACTS LIST

Rodwell built up a list of contacts prior to becoming a freelancer. He says you have to be prepared to work hard to get yourself out there. “Take every opportunity to tell everyone what you do. Word of mouth is absolutely crucial. I've gained many of my best gigs simply by talking to people,” he explains.

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

8 TIPS TO EASE THE TRANSITION TO FREELANCE LIFE

01 PREPARE ON THE BUSINESS FRONT

Are you going to be a sole trader or limited company? Operating as a sole trader is relatively simple: just contact HMRC and register for self assessment. The latter is a little more complicated, but means you'll pay less personal tax.

02 BUILD IT UP SLOWLY

"Build things up slowly by working in the evenings and at weekends," advises Caterina Bianchini. "Then you won't have a mad rush when you eventually decide to go freelance and you can make sure freelance is absolutely what you want to do."

03 MANAGE YOUR TIME

"Make sure you can manage projects and your own time, too," continues Bianchini. "You can't decide that because you work better from midnight till 4 in the morning then that's how you're going to work. Clients don't operate like that."

04 BE SELF-MOTIVATED

"Being self-motivated is huge," agrees Jack Daly. "On a rainy Tuesday morning with no work it's easy to snooze the alarm, but doing self-initiated projects is an integral part of a freelancer's life."

05 BE FINANCE SAVVY

Start keeping records of your invoices and payments. Also invest in some accounting software to help you generate invoices and estimates, track time and keep on top of your incomings and outgoings.

06 SAVE YOUR SALARY

Three months' salary in the bank is a safe buffer for easing the transition. "I made sure I had some money set aside to cover the basics, just in case I didn't get the projects I needed in," agrees Bianchini.

07 LINE UP SOME JOBS

Make sure you have work booked in for your first few weeks. "I made sure I would definitely be working on something, rather than leaving work and then getting too comfortable with not doing too much," laughs Bianchini.

08 VALUE YOURSELF

"Work out what your skill and experience are worth," urges Daly. "Sometimes your quote will fall outside a client's budget but you can often negotiate."



"JUST MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO GIVE FULL BRAIN POWER TO BOTH YOUR FULL-TIME AND FREELANCE JOB"

CATERINA BIANCHINI
DESIGNER AND ART DIRECTOR

– and effectively working two jobs – he decided to go full-time freelance.

Before making the leap, his biggest consideration was ensuring he'd saved enough money to pay the bills for the initial months. "This is particularly important, as even if you've got commissions lined up right away, you won't necessarily see any money for one to three months," explains Daly, who's worked for a variety of clients over the last 18 months, including Adele, Foreign Affairs Magazine and InVision. "Sure you can put 'pay within 28 days' in your terms, but it's still no guarantee."

After working with his agent for six months, he was confident he would have enough work coming in – but another key consideration was whether he would enjoy working alone at home. "I ended up taking a desk at a shared space run by Scottish studio Freytag Anderson," he says. "In the beginning, I actually traded them some design time for the desk, meaning I didn't have to worry about forking out cash while still establishing my freelance career."

Is there any preparation he would do now if he were to go freelance again? "I'd get a business account set up straight away. You get a separate debit card, so you can make any business purchases from the same account your invoices are paid into. You can then link that account to a service like FreeAgent to help manage your finances and make the dreaded tax return as pain-free as possible."

London-based designer and art director Caterina Bianchini initially hired an accountant when she went freelance – but ended up doing her own self-assessment. "I decided to get rid of him because I felt it was really important to

understand expenses, tax and national insurance," she explains.

She works for clients including Nike, Red Bull and Topshop, and recommends building up your freelance work gradually, in evenings and weekends, before doing it full-time. "Just make sure you understand that you need to be able to give full brain power to both your full-time job and the freelance work during the transition," she advises. "I think that's the hardest bit. But it does allow you to see just how much work you can achieve when you have to do it. With freelance, I was on limited time, so I had to make sure I was working at my highest potential."

Bianchini says her biggest challenge is continuing to get new, bigger clients. "It's good to make sure your work is constantly getting better, and growing in skill and technique," she says. "I'm super on top of my emails. I try to get back to people within a day. There's so much talent and competition, you have to make sure you give the client requests the time they need. Also, make sure whatever you spend, you keep receipts for, or whatever you buy online, you file away your invoice for. This is something that took me a while to get used to."

"Don't be a wallflower, advises Daly. "Having a social media presence is huge. Platforms such as Behance, Twitter, Dribbble and Instagram are essential tools in building your profile and winning new work. When you've created new work, share it on all of your platforms. I've found the more you share, the more commission enquiries you receive. This is particularly satisfying when it's one of those self-initiated projects you dragged yourself out of bed to create that leads directly to a lucrative new commission."



3 Survive unexpected redundancy

Not everyone is lucky enough to enjoy a smooth, planned transition into freelance life. Unexpected redundancy or other unforeseen circumstances can send you into a tailspin – but there are some advantages to this route into freelance life: namely, that the decision to go freelance is made for you.

“I spent so much time scared that I wouldn’t be able to go freelance, that I never bothered,” says Vancouver-based freelance designer Kevin Moore, aka Soft Surrogate. He was laid off from his job at a print shop with a two-week notice period shortly before his first wedding anniversary. “I panicked,” he admits. “There wasn’t enough time to scrimp and save enough to start my own company. But rather than get depressed about it, I had to face it full-on.”

Almost instantly, he was able to take on a “ton of work” because his days were

entirely freed up. “My turnaround times got way faster, and as a result I got more clients. I hustled doing 12 and 16-hour days just promoting my work, finding new clients and doing whatever work would come my way. I was able to save a little ‘safety net’ of funds within the first couple months. I just tightened my belt and put a bunch of my initial pay cheques into savings accounts and into my estimated income tax for the remainder of the year.”

Whatever your circumstances, it’s always useful to be prepared for a career move. “Always keep an up-to-date CV and portfolio,” advises Newcastle upon Tyne-based creative director Dave Milburn. “Shit happens. You never know when you’ll need it.”

Milburn was forced into freelance life in 2007, during the credit crunch. Initially he found work in other agencies around the area, where he had friends, filling in

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR NOTICE PERIOD

6 TIPS FOR TURNING THE SHOCK OF REDUNDANCY INTO A POSITIVE OPPORTUNITY

01 THINK POSITIVELY

“Being laid off sucks. You feel betrayed. But don’t let those thoughts overtake you. Use your notice period to forge ahead and think positively,” advises Kevin Moore. “Take on tons of work, get creative, and let that negative energy be turned into something positive.”

02 DO WHAT WORKS FOR YOU

“There is no right or wrong way to become a successful freelance designer. If you find clients by printing flyers and going to local shows, do that. If you prefer social media, do that. Find whatever works for you during your notice period and do it over and over again to build your client list. All you need is one solid job lined up, then you go get more.”

03 LEAVE ON A HIGH

Avoid the temptation to stick two fingers up at the establishment. Instead, focus on strengthening your relationship with your employer. Maintain professionalism and help tie up all loose ends. After all, you might want a testimony from your boss – and leaving on a positive note ensures the door will be left open for you.

04 STAY FOCUSED

Are there any skills or techniques you need to master quickly, or core knowledge you can get under your belt during your notice period? Are there some project images you can get permission to use for your portfolio? Don’t disengage: use your notice period to harvest as much as you can from your current employer (while remembering tip 03).

05 UPDATE YOUR PORTFOLIO

“Hit the ground running with a current CV and up-to-date portfolio,” says Dave Milburn. Use your notice period to update your online and social presence, adding any new projects and case studies to your portfolio, and amending your About page. Most importantly: think about the sort of work you want to do and tailor your portfolio accordingly.

06 SET CLEAR GOALS

Take it one day at a time – but make sure you have goals and you’re saving your first paycheques. “My personal goal was to save up four months’ worth of rent and bills, so that if I didn’t get any work for four months I could still afford to survive,” says Moore. “It was more than enough, and it was nice to have that mental goal.”

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR COURSE

7 WAYS TO SWITCH TO DESIGN FROM A DIFFERENT CAREER

01 KNOW WHAT YOU WANT

Switching career gives you the opportunity to shape your future. Don't jump at the first opportunity: think carefully about what you want. What do you love doing? What sort of working environment do you want? Identify what fulfils you so you can make the right choices.

02 TRY EVERYTHING

Duncan Blachford advises fully immersing yourself in a lot of different areas to build up a better understanding of what your new career would or could entail, and where you might be best suited. "Try a range of styles and mediums, use your hands – make it tangible," he advises

03 START STUDYING

Supplement your practical exploration with studying. You could take an evening class, go back to university or simply expand your reading list. "Dig into design history," agrees Blachford. "It's rich in social and political context."

04 IDENTIFY YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

You might feel older than the average junior but you will have valuable transferable skills and experience that will translate into your new career. You were a chef? You have organisation and leadership skills. You were a musician? You're creative and have confidence. Think about the skills a studio wants and show how you have them.

05 MAKE NEW FRIENDS

Start hanging out with designers and creatives working in the area you'd like to be in. Attend meet-ups, go to talks, participate as much as possible and embrace your local design community. The net effect will help you move forward.

06 TAKE IT GRADUALLY

Moving into your new career through a series of jobs can be more effective than trying to reinvent your career overnight. This has the added bonus of potentially protecting your salary, too, rather than going back to entry level wages.

07 EDIT YOUR CV

It might be tempting to include every job you've ever had but aim to keep your CV to two pages maximum. Identify the goals of your prospective employer and then tie your work experience, skills and goals into those.



"FREELANCING MEANS A DIFFERENT DYNAMIC AND ENVIRONMENT EVERY DAY, SO YOU NEED TO LEARN TO ADAPT AND STACK FROM DIFFERENT CREATIVE ANGLES"

DAVE MILBURN CREATIVE DIRECTOR

for holidays or helping when there was a deadline to meet. "The rate of pay was initially good, but the North East gradually dried up as more of the large agencies shut down and were replaced by start-ups and one-man bands."

Milburn is now creative director at an agency and freelances on the side. The biggest lesson he's learned is to 'multi-zone'. "Freelancing usually means a different dynamic and creative environment every day," he explains, "so you need to learn to stack from different creative angles, and adapt to a different ethos and workflow."

Moore stresses that learning the business side of self-employment is crucial. "What kills so many creative entrepreneurs is that they love to be starry-eyed, hippy, creative types and

just ignore the business end of things. I've almost fallen victim to that same way of thinking – I just want to draw all day."

He also advises not being a jerk. "I try and take a breather when I get an email that rubs me the wrong way. If you respond like a jerk, you lose that client and whoever they tell forever. Take a day. Take a deep breath. Respond kindly and use your communication skills to maybe show the client why their suggestions might not work for what they want. I've said it 100 times: 75 per cent of my job is convincing clients that I'm right."

Moore says his biggest regret is not being laid off sooner. "I thought I loved where I worked before – but the truth is, I would come home and bitch and complain all the time. I guess I needed that push off the edge to show myself I could land."

"WHAT KILLS SO MANY CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS IS THAT THEY LOVE TO BE STARRY-EYED, HIPPY, CREATIVE TYPES AND IGNORE THE BUSINESS END OF THINGS"

KEVIN MOORE FREELANCE DESIGNER



4



Change your career entirely

“OVER THE LAST 24 MONTHS, MY CREATIVE INTERESTS STARTED SHIFTING FROM MUSIC TO DESIGN – AND IT’S QUICKLY DEVELOPED INTO AN OBSESSION”

DUNCAN BLACHFORD
DESIGNER AND PUBLISHER

Melbourne-based designer and occasional publisher Duncan Blachford took another route entirely into freelance life. Previously a musician, he was working in admin at a book publishing company when the firm’s designer was knocked off his bike and broke both arms.

Blachford became his hands. “I was happy as a typesetter,” he recalls, “and didn’t even think about becoming a designer for a long time. Over the last 24 months, my creative interests started shifting from music to design – and it’s quickly developed into an obsession.”

Although Blachford had designed his own record covers and gig posters for 20 years – and was increasingly being asked to create work for others – he’d only recently realised that design could be a career option. He’d just started applying for jobs when he was made redundant.

“I didn’t have a folio, so I started creating new work for each job I went for,” he says. “I had to work fast and in a range of styles and contexts. Suddenly design seemed like a super-creative field.”

Blachford was also watching a lot of tutorials, and the confidence restrictions

he’d previously felt disappeared. “I read books by Robert Bringhurst, Jost Hochuli, Norman Potter, Paul Rand, Michael Bierut, Experimental Jetset, Jan van Toorn, Jan Tschichold, Joseph Müller-Brockman – this was all rewiring my brain, and I realised there was a rich design history with deep social and political aspects to it. I was listening to Debbie Millman’s ‘Design Matters’ and whatever else I could find online. Then I enrolled in a Master of Communication Design course at RMIT.”

The biggest challenge he’s faced, he says, is his age, and that he’s only worked in-house. “Even though my mid-30s doesn’t feel old at all, I have a feeling I’m seen as too old for junior roles, but can’t land a mid-weight or senior position in a studio either as they all want studio experience,” he explains. “Going freelance seems the way to go. Maybe after a few years I’ll be able to move into a studio, or start one with some friends.”

It’s early days still: his first clients were friends and workmates, then friends of friends and now complete strangers from different walks of life. He also subcontracts for other designers, and recently started taking some freelance shifts in larger cultural institutions.

“Between family life, work and study, life is pretty hectic and I rarely switch off,” he admits. “I’m hoping the dust will settle but freedom and chaos are intertwined. It’s pretty wild. I’m still green but I’m super excited and I’ve found that people do want really creative solutions. And I don’t mind doing dry stuff that pays the bills, too.”

What’s his best advice? Just dive right in. “I started late but immersed myself and it feels like a new creative world has opened up. Ideas are flowing and I feel up for any challenge.” ■



**NEXT
MONTH**

SOCIAL MEDIA SELF-PROMO

How to promote yourself more effectively on social media, and choose the right tools for you.

THE UK'S TOP 5 DESIGN STUDIOS

Welcome to the UK Studio Rankings 2017,
our annual rundown of the very best design
studios in the country, as voted by their peers...



Earlier this year, we polled over 80 top creative directors, studio founders and design course leaders from across the UK to discover which industry peers they most revere, respect and in some cases envy, to produce our annual UK Studio Rankings. This is all about peer reputation – regardless of number of staff, operating budget or awards won. In short, the 50 world-class studios on this list are there because their fellow designers think they should be.

Each of our panel members were asked to pick the five UK design businesses that they most respect, in order. Studios that regularly create inspiring work that they wish they'd done; like-minded studios with complementary skills and mindsets, who they've collaborated with or would like to; studios that have an innovative, creative, groundbreaking approach that they feel is ahead of the curve; or studios that have cleaned up at the big design awards this year. These criteria were only a guide, however – panellists were free to choose based on their own terms too.

This is the UK Studio Rankings' fourth year, and just as we did in 2015 and 2016, we've revealed the changes from last year. Several previous winners and high-rankers feature in our top 10, but the tiny studio in the top spot has rocketed up the list after an incredible year. There are several other major risers too, plus a healthy batch of new entries, and re-entries from agencies that slipped off the list in 2016.

As per usual, we've provided some useful stats about the studios on the list, including size, location and opportunities to work for them – as well as their thoughts on the looming issue of Brexit. So read on to discover the UK's Top 50 studios for 2017...

THE SELECTION PROCESS

A panel of over 80 creative directors each nominated five of their peers, in order. Their first choice received 5 points, their second choice 4 points, their third choice 3 points, and so on. Studios were then ranked based on total points awarded. In the event of a tie, the studio with more nominations was ranked higher; if they were still tied, the studio with the most first-choice nominations took precedence.

CHANGES SINCE 2016

▲ UP ▼

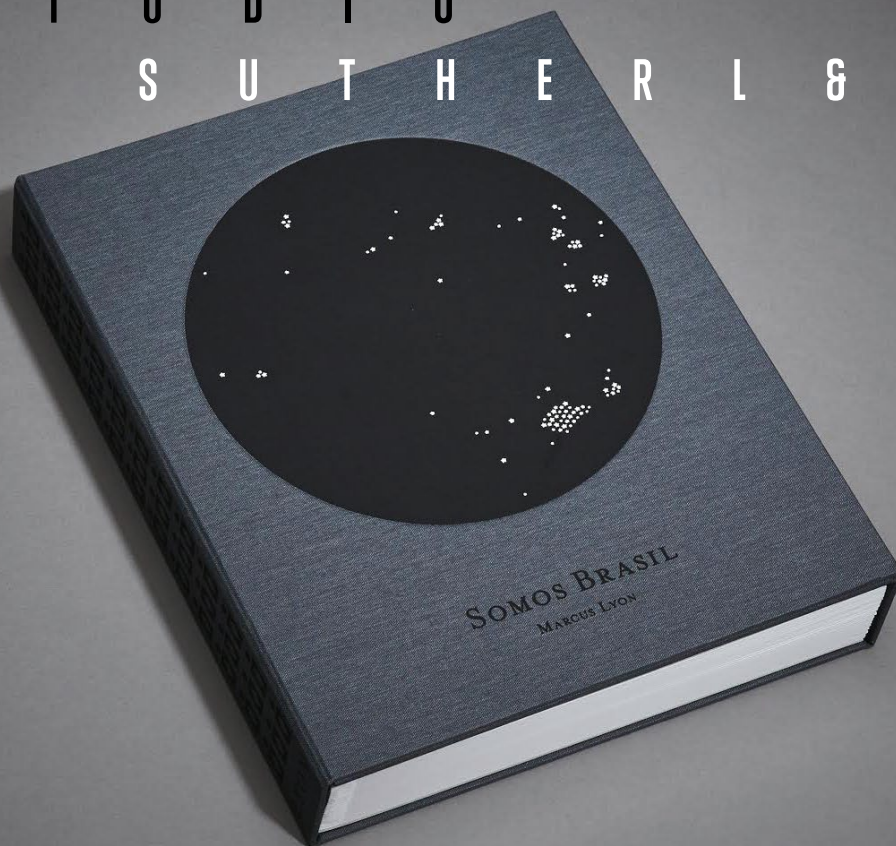
▲ DOWN ▼

✈ NEW ENTRY / RE-ENTRY

STUDIO SUTHERLAND

01

▲ 11 ▼



Jim Sutherland with the trophy for top UK studio at the Brand Impact Awards event

www.studio-sutherland.co.uk

FOUNDED
2014

LOCATION
KENNINGTON,
SOUTH LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



CREATIVE ROLES

100%

The rest of this year's top five have all been there before, but the studio voted at the very top of its game in 2017 has rocketed up the list this year.

"Consistently clever", said one of our panellists. "Beautiful work that leaves you with a smile," said another, while a third added that this studio "makes this stuff look effortless, elegant and enjoyable."

Studio Sutherl& may be tiny, but that doesn't stop it creating show-stopping work. It may be relatively new in its current form compared to some of the industry titans on the list, but no one can doubt the industry experience of its founder, who a fourth panellist described as "the next Alan Fletcher".

Climbing 11 places this year, the studio took an early lead and kept extending it as more votes came in – the fact that this two-person outfit was also D&AD's

most-awarded design studio this year can't have hurt either. To quote a fifth panellist: "How does he keep on doing it?"

We spoke to founder Jim Sutherland – who designed this issue's cover, as well as the D&AD Annual featured in our Showcase section – to find out...

Biggest highlight of 2017?

Probably the launch of the Somos Brasil project in São Paulo, with Marcus Lyon [highly commended at 2017's Brand Impact Awards]. It's a project we've been working on for two years, and seeing it appear in Brazil was a delight. Second, running a work(play)shop in Tokyo for D&AD – a surreal and beautiful experience.

And the biggest challenge?

Controlling the flow of work. I get so excited about the possibilities of lovely projects that I find it hard to say no.

What advice would you give to a fellow UK studio to thrive in the face of Brexit uncertainty?

Two things: do good work, and everything else will flow from that; only work for people you like, and don't do it for the money. That's three things really. I don't think Brexit will affect my business directly, but it's an extremely depressing decision.

What are your own biggest ambitions for 2018, and how do you plan to achieve them?

My ambition is simply to keep doing something that I love. I want to keep collaborating with fantastic people.

Finally, how does it feel to be rated the top studio in the country by your peers?

It's amazing. The design industry in this country is full of so many incredibly talented people, so it's an honour to be among them.



Far left: Somos Brasil book.

Left: TypoCircle identity in various applications (joint with NB Studio).

Below: Somos Brasil exhibition.



N O R T H

02

▲ 01 ▼

www.northdesign.co.ukFOUNDED
1995LOCATION
FARRINGDON,
CENTRAL LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



CREATIVE ROLES

87%

NEW HIRES THIS
YEAR 2

INTERNS PER YEAR 1



Co-founders Sean Perkins and Stephen Gilmore with their second-place trophy

Having topped our list in 2016, North fared incredibly strongly once again from the outset, and only Studio Sutherland's storming victory could bump the 22-year-old studio into second place.

As one panellist put it, North has "transformed from cool outsiders to muscular brand behemoths." Another praised the studio's "timeless, lovely thinking", while a third admired the team's knack for "simplifying big problems."

Co-founders Sean Perkins and Stephen Gilmore share how their year has gone..

Talk us through your year...

We've been lucky enough to work with some great clients, so it's hard to pick a specific project. But moving into our new studio has been a huge moment for us.

How did the move go?

It sounds mundane, but coping with the complexity of our over-running studio build, alongside some very demanding projects, made for a challenging year. Thanks to the whole team for getting us all through it.

How do you think Brexit may affect your business, and the UK's global design reputation?

Until the outcomes of the Brexit negotiations become clearer,

it's foolish to predict. We try to remain positive. It certainly feels like the UK's design reputation is as strong as it's ever been.

Any advice for your peers to help it stay that way?

Even in tough and uncertain times, please don't pitch creative work for fee. It undermines and demeans us all.

What are your own biggest ambitions for 2018?

There are a few non-client based projects we've wanted to do for a while now. It would be nice to put them out in 2018.

North has fared brilliantly in the rankings again. How does it feel?

Some great projects have been produced by other studios this year. Honestly, we're amazed and flattered to get the recognition.



03



www.manvsmachine.co.uk

FOUNDED
2007

LOCATION
HAGGERSTON,
EAST LONDON; PLUS
LOS ANGELES

NUMBER OF STAFF

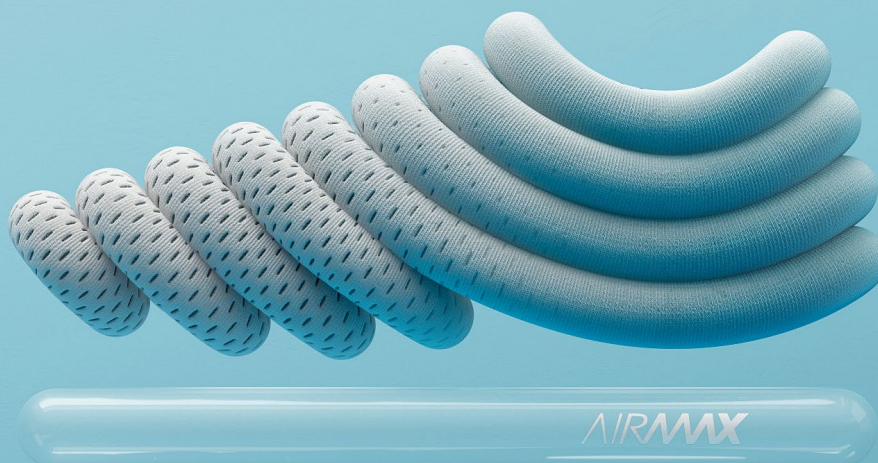


CREATIVE ROLES

85%

NEW HIRES THIS
YEAR 1

INTERNS PER YEAR 1



M A N V S M A C H I N E



Co-founder Tim Swift and art director Michael Mason collect their award

Another consistently strong performer in our rankings, ManvsMachine was in second place in 2016, and fourth place in 2015. Like North, the studio – now a part of Landor – was bumped just one place this year.

“I consistently adore the work from these guys,” said one panellist. Another called them “mesmerising”, while a third voted them onto the list because of “their absolute lushness”.

Here’s exec producer Ellie Bailey to tell us more...

MvsM is 10 this year. What have you learnt over the past decade?

Looking back, the consistency of our output – and the pride we can take in it – is immensely satisfying. We collected a few more awards in 2017, and are larger than at any point in our history, across two studios. It’s an exciting time to take stock and get ready for the next decade.

Creating a studio culture like ours requires constant recalibration, ensuring we get the right combination of briefs that answer different needs, enough time for R&D, and access to the creative stimuli we need.

Are you concerned about Brexit?

Our team is made up of people from all over the world, which we have in common with many studios in London and across the UK. We are better protected than

some industries, and prospective staff are all very highly skilled, so we hope it won’t become less attractive for global talent to join us. Uncertainty is so far the worst effect of Brexit, so it’s important to remain calm. The current exchange rate can even be a silver lining – we’re more cost-effective to global clients right now.

You’ve kept your top-three spot, that must feel pretty good?

The CA audience are industry colleagues at great studios that we admire, so it’s awesome to be recognised in that context. It spurs us to continue producing work that keeps us top of the pile. It’s given us a sense of validation, as we’ve shown off the breadth of our skillset this year – illustrative, procedural, live action, VFX, identity, branding. It’s wonderful that it’s all been so well-received.



T H E P A R T N E R S

04

▲ 12 ▼

www.the-partners.comFOUNDED
1983LOCATION
FARRINGDON,
CENTRAL LONDON;
PLUS NEW YORK
AND SINGAPORE

NUMBER OF STAFF

CREATIVE ROLES
70%INTERNS PER YEAR:
24

RATTLE



Jumping from 17 on last year's list to the top five, The Partners has explored new territory in 2017, says UK creative director Stuart Radford (left). "We've done some very exciting work that has seen us push into new areas of design, such as moving image, digital and 3D installation," he explains. "We've also been working with a broad range of clients across different sectors: the arts, professional services, artisan products and even extraterrestrial communications – a very diverse set of projects, but we love it."

What have been the standout projects of 2017?

Creating and launching the new visual identity for the London Symphony Orchestra to mark the appointment of conductor Sir Simon Rattle [Best of Show



at CA's Brand Impact Awards]. This gave us the opportunity to innovate an identity we created in 2004. Creating the brand for #RewritingTheCode, an initiative to expose hidden values and behavioural codes of gender

inequality. We were proud to see that on its launch day, it was trending on Twitter at no 4. And collaborating with Lambie-Nairn to rebrand Arte, Europe's leading culture channel. We created a moving-image brand for broadcast, a first for The Partners.

How will Brexit affect you?

When it comes to hiring, we prefer to bring the right people in on a permanent basis. We believe this is better for the culture, the work and our clients. Therefore our freelance requirements are relatively small. In terms of Brexit, who knows what will happen? But it's not all doom and gloom. Opportunities can come out of the most unlikely situations. Just a month after the referendum, we were invited to pitch for the Arte work, and next week we're off to meet a new European client.

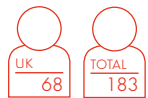
P E N T A G R A M

05

▲ 10 ▼

www.pentagram.comFOUNDED
1972LOCATION
NOTTING HILL,
LONDON; PLUS
WORLDWIDE

NUMBER OF STAFF

CREATIVE ROLES
80%

Rather like *The Partners*, Pentagram's jump from 15th to the top five stands testament to a constant flow of great work on high-profile projects. These have included a visual identity for UK charity Nesta; the 2016 edition of *The Typographic Circle's* magazine; a new typographic and story-driven identity for the Old Vic theatre, and a visual identity, dynamic typeface and pattern generator for machine-learning start-up Graphcore. The partners behind the latter, Luke Powell and Jody Hudson-Powell (both left), who joined in late 2015, share their thoughts on the last 12 months...

What's been your biggest highlight of 2017 so far?

Being able to work on a broad range of projects that utilise all of our skills, such as Graphcore,

an AI start-up in Bristol. For Pentagram, the high has been continuing to work with a high calibre of client.

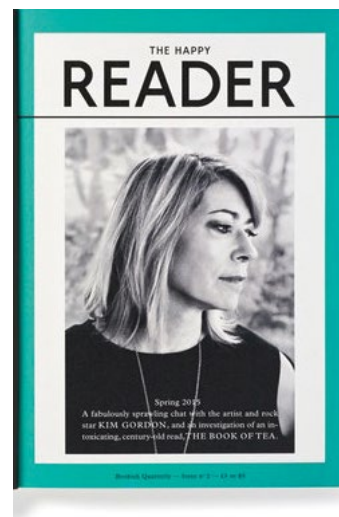
What are the biggest challenges you face going into 2018?

As we're independent, we're still able to choose the projects we work on. We want to remain a studio that can take any size of project, from a beach hut in Brazil to Mastercard's rebrand. Keeping that balance is a challenge.

How do you think Brexit will affect the studio?

Who knows? Obviously it's something we are concerned about. We're trying not to be pessimistic, but it's hard.

Why do you think you were picked by your peers as one of the top agencies of 2017?



It's a huge compliment. We think it's because of Pentagram's ability to stay relevant, which is driven by one of the firm's founding principles: to invite in new partners who bring with them different sets of skills.

06

▲ 03 ▼

M A D E
T H O U G H T

C L A U D I A

S C H I E F F E R

2015's winner Made Thought has never fallen prey to complacency. As director Ben Parker (bottom left) says: "The last 12 months have been as much about focusing on our internal culture – defining how we work, not just thinking about what we do." That includes moving to a new studio, doing more international work, and getting more involved in experience design for clients, including Adidas StellaSport.

Any standout projects of 2017?

The Nue Co involved working with the founder to create a new brand from scratch. The market of luxury supplements is growing, and our client believes much of the success of Nue can be traced to its brand and design. Another highlight has been our work for Adidas StellaSport – we shot two seasons' worth of visuals.

What are the biggest challenges you face going into 2018?

Branding is part of what we do: thinking deeply about why and how the brand feels and behaves, not just ensuring it looks beautiful. So maybe a challenge, or something we'd like to get better at, is communicating what we do and the breadth.

How do you think Brexit will affect Made Thought?

We haven't felt the impact yet, but our concerns would be about the implications of Brexit on business as a whole. However, if anything, Brexit is making us think more about opportunities further afield, such as the USA and Asia, where we're growing business anyway.

www.madethought.com

FOUNDED
2000

LOCATION
FITZROVIA, CENTRAL
LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



CREATIVE ROLES

60%

INTERNS PER YEAR 6

NEW HIRES THIS
YEAR 10

FREELANCE SHIFTS
PER YEAR 3



G R A P H I C

T H O U G H T

07

▲ 02 ▼

F A C I L I T Y

www.graphicthoughtfacility.comFOUNDED
1991LOCATION
BETHNAL GREEN,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



CREATIVE ROLES

93%

INTERNS THIS YEAR 5

NEW HIRES THIS
YEAR 1

Last December saw 2014's rankings-topper Graphic Thought Facility move studios, from Clerkenwell to Bethnal Green. "We went from an area we've been in for over 20 years, and it was quite a wrench," reflects director Huw Morgan. "We intended this move to be our last: we're only a small studio, but it took a year of planning, work and renovation." It was necessary though: "Space is increasingly becoming a luxury in this city. The rocketing rents are tough and particularly destructive for the creative industries." Morgan reflects on the year that followed...

What's been your biggest highlight of 2017 so far?

Having a place to put a bike! Continuing to work with existing clients, and developing relationships with some lovely



new ones. We've just completed a project for COS – its first book, launched in October; a monograph for Industrial Facility is almost complete; a new identity and magazine for Gagosian; work with Vitra and Kvadrat; the third-year of Photo London, and the start of new Holocaust exhibition at the Imperial War Museum.

Outside of work: Hockney at the Tate, Nathalie Du Pasquier at Pace, the chair collection at Vitra Schauderpot, and Love Island.

What's Graphic Thought Facility's take on Brexit?

It's such a crazy own goal. Our client list is fairly international, so I guess at the moment the upside for them is that we are less expensive than we were were a couple of years ago.

The obvious concern is staff. We have long-standing designers from France, Switzerland, Germany and Portugal, and I'm delighted that, for now, they are still with us, pushed by neither fear nor law. Long term, like everyone else, including the politicians, while I can guess on the possibilities, I have no idea of the reality. Of all things, I hope this Brexit still allows freedom of movement.

08

▲ 13 ▼


www.johnsonbanks.co.uk
FOUNDED
1992LOCATION
CLAPHAM, SOUTH
LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



CREATIVE ROLES

60%

INTERNS PER YEAR
6-12

Founder Michael Johnson (right) describes 2017 so far as “a rollercoaster” year for Johnson Banks, not least due to the success of its experimental website rebrand, which was widely acclaimed across the design community. There was also an innovative campaign for the Action for Children charity, and the high-stakes rebrand of Mozilla “in the open” – winner of the Collaboration Award at CA’s Brand Impact Awards – where each significant stage of the process was shared publicly. So it’s perhaps not surprising to see them jump from 21 last year into the top 10...

What have been the standout projects of 2017?
Getting to a decent result with



Mozilla. Carrying out the Mozilla rebrand in the open was an unprecedented challenge, but I think we just about coped. Also, continuing to do some valuable not-for-profit work with Action for Children and Action Against Hunger. Oh, and a new (and seemingly popular) website – that was a result.

What are the biggest challenges you face going into 2018?

Same as we face every year: seeing more than six months ahead in terms of projects and turnover.

How do you think Brexit will affect the studio?

As regards working in Europe, that hasn’t affected us hugely yet, as our clients are spread far and wide, so paradoxically a weaker pound has helped there.

But as the ‘Brexit Blues’ start to sink in, I’m a little worried that it might affect consumer and client confidence. And for some of the sectors we work in, such as education, the implications are fairly catastrophic.

Why do you think you were picked by your peers as one of the top studios?

Well, I’m not sure, apart from being very flattered! Maybe it’s because we’re living proof that a small studio can do global, important projects? Maybe.

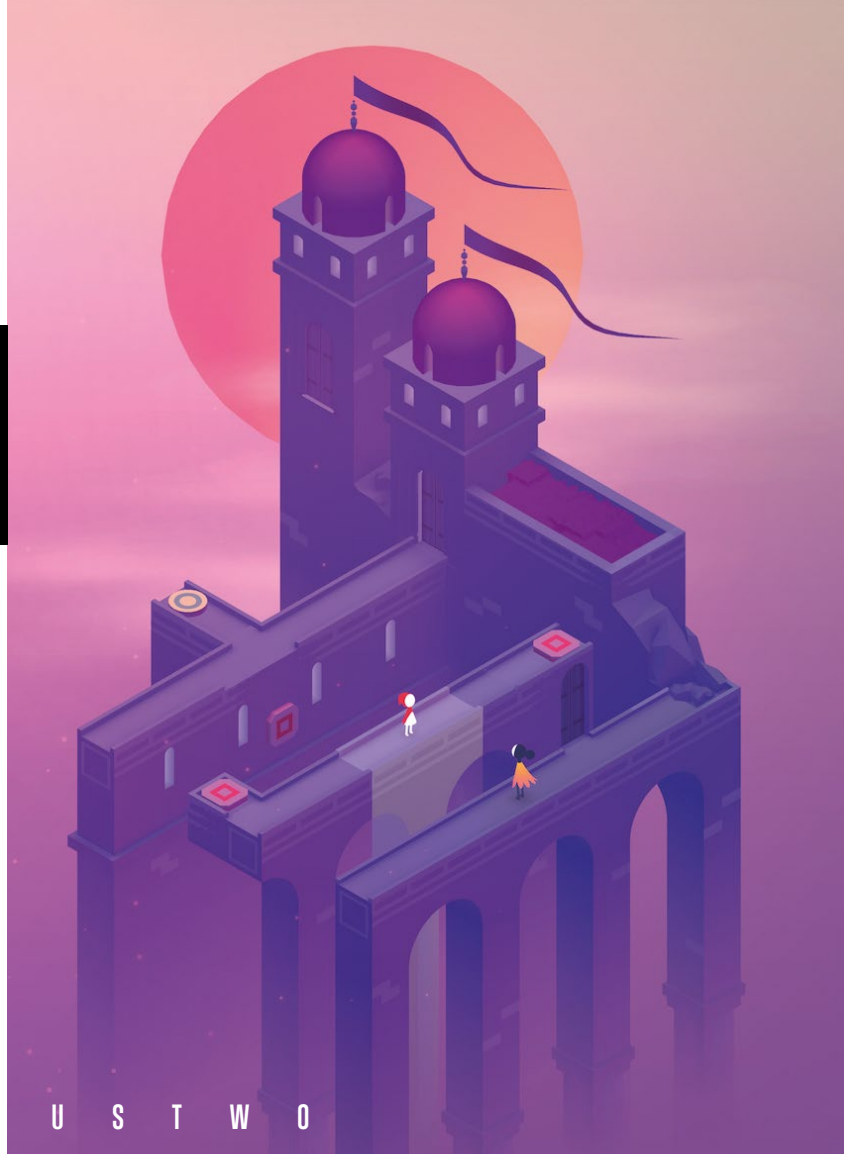


09

▲ 09 ▼

www.ustwo.comFOUNDED
2004LOCATION
SHOREDITCH, EAST
LONDON; PLUS
MALMÖ, NEW YORK
AND SYDNEY

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 8

This year, ustwo has hit some big milestones culture-wise, reveals Nicki Sprinz, managing director. “In particular, we’re immensely proud to have introduced equal parental leave – six months for each parent. This will enable mums and dads who work for us to have a real choice, and gives the opportunity to establish a balanced work-home life from day one.” In terms of the effect of Brexit, client work has increased, and the majority of their relationships are growing. “But it certainly is starting to present a challenge to us on the talent side,” she admits.

4 C R E A T I V E

10

▲ 04 ▼

www.4creative.co.ukFOUNDED
2005LOCATION
WESTMINSTER,
CENTRAL LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



4Creative is the in-house creative agency of Channel 4, and 2017 has seen it achieve a number of high-impact goals. “For instance, we’ve been encouraging young people to pop their voting cherry via our E4 election ad, and persuaded a record four million people to watch women’s football via our Women’s Euro campaign,” says head of business Jane English. Going into 2018, Brexit is a potential concern. “Channel 4 is funded by advertising, so if the ad market suffers, our marketing budgets might too,” reflects English. “But we would use this as an opportunity to be more creative than ever.”



SPECIAL REPORT

11
NEW ENTRY



www.studiokoto.co

FOUNDED
2015

LOCATION
SOUTHWARK,
SOUTH LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 4

“As a relatively young agency, change is a constant in our lives,” says James Greenfield, founder and creative director of Koto, a newcomer to our list. “This year, we’ve won a couple of very big accounts, and done some high-profile work, which has generally been well received. Getting the global Fanta rebrand out to the world has been the biggest highlight. You really don’t realise how ubiquitous it is as a product until you travel and see our work in fridges the world over. Lots of friends and family have sent photos of it back from their various holidays this summer.”

K O T O



12
▲ 04 ▼

O K - R M

www.ok-rm.co.uk

FOUNDED
2008

LOCATION
BETHNAL GREEN,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 1



“We are excited about a lot that has happened this year, but our publishing imprint InOtherWords in particular continues to motivate us,” says OK-RM co-founder Rory McGrath. “We’re excited to be launching a book and exhibition with Juergen Teller and Vivienne Westwood, as well as the comprehensive Gestalt with Fos; and Disobedient Bodies with Jonathan Anderson and Andrew Bonacina.” OK-RM has recently started work on a large-scale fashion project that will launch in Paris in January: “Our role will be creative directors of the brand, and our responsibilities will reach every aspect.”

13

▲ 13 ▼

J K R

ENJOY FREELY.


www.jkrglobal.com
FOUNDED
1990LOCATION
CAMDEN, NORTH
LONDON; PLUS
SHANGHAI, NEW
YORK, SINGAPORE

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 40

The word that best sums up 2017 for Jones Knowles Ritchie is “diverse”, says creative director Sean Thomas. “Clients are asking us more challenging questions, and this is pushing us out of our comfort zone,” he adds. The year’s most high-profile project has probably been the new identity for The Diana Award: the first project launched under the JKR Foundation, which was set up to undertake work for good causes. Other highlights have included branding Budweiser ‘America’, designing a Selfridges window display for Heinz Beanz, launching haircare brand FORM in the US and redesigning the identity for fashion shoe brand Butterfly Twists.

14

NEW ENTRY



T H E

B E A U T I F U L M E M E

www.thebeautifulmeme.com
FOUNDED
2015LOCATION
WHITECHAPEL,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 4

Tom Sharp, creative director of The Beautiful Meme, has some lyrical words to describe the last 12 months. They’ve been, he says: “Like being on a catwalk in a see-through dress. Like hearing The Rite of Spring for the first time. Like getting a 147 break in your local snooker club.” Meanwhile, as far as Brexit’s concerned, Sharp sees it as “Just another asteroid to fly around”. And as to why The Beautiful Meme might have been picked by its peers as one of the top agencies, he responds, simply: “Our name is very easy to remember.”



15

RE-ENTRY

A L P H A B E T I C A L


www.alphabeticalstudio.com
FOUNDED
2010LOCATION
SHOREDITCH,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 2

The last 12 months have seen Alphabetical take on two new juniors, attract new clients, and work on larger and more diverse briefs than ever before, says creative partner Tommy Taylor. "We've built a part of London out of made objects, we've created 10x15ft local wildlife creatures out of concrete, and we've helped a valuable iconic British charity rethink who they are." Going forward, the team are unclear whether Brexit will affect the studio. "Post referendum, it feels like demand for design services is accelerating," Taylor reports. "Creativity doesn't have a border control, thankfully."



16

▲ 07 ▼

A P R A C T I C E F O R
E V E R Y D A Y L I F E
www.apracticeforeverydaylife.com
FOUNDED
2003LOCATION
BETHNAL GREEN,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 0

The opening of Tate's David Hockney exhibition in January, along with the launch of the accompanying catalogue, was an early highlight for A Practice for Everyday Life (APFEL) this year, say co-founders Emma Thomas and Kirsty Carter. "We've been fans of Hockney's work since we were growing up, and the opportunity to work on a publication for him has always been on our list of dream projects – especially on such a large scale." Other highlights include the Basquiat: Boom for Real exhibition at the Barbican Centre this September, while they're also excited to be moving studios at the start of 2018.



17

▲ 07 ▼

www.waredesignstudio.comFOUNDED
2009LOCATION
SHOREDITCH, EAST
LONDON; PLUS SAN
FRANCISCO

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 11

D E S I G N S T U D I O



"We've been (literally) around the world, with teams working across Europe, Japan, America, Colombia, Philippines, Nigeria, Pakistan and India. It's been incredible," says DesignStudio's principal James Hurst, reflecting on the year. And so the spectre of Brexit certainly doesn't faze them. "In 2018, we'll continue to find and hire the best talent, irrespective of where people are based," he says. So who exactly are they looking for? "People who can help define what a brand is, and give our clients the clarity and confidence on how that thinking will accelerate their ambitions," explains Hurst.

18

NEW ENTRY



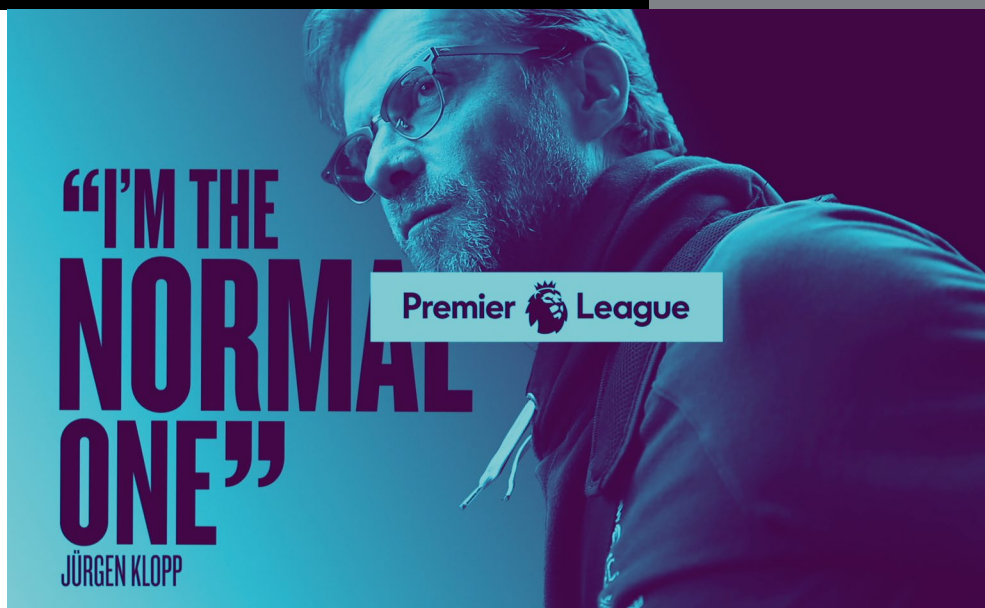
D I X O N B A X I

www.dixonbaxi.comFOUNDED
2001LOCATION
WAPPING, EAST
LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



"To keep an agency running over 15-16 years, reinvention and reinvigoration is important," says DixonBaxi co-founder Simon Dixon. "This year has delivered on a lot of that approach, based around a renewed energy to create work we're proud of." Looking ahead, though, he's saddened by Brexit. "We're half-international in team make-up, and 70 per cent of our work is global," he says. "Brexit feels like a step back. However, we think it will be okay. We'll remain open to the world, hire the best people wherever they come from, and fight any sense that international talent is not welcome."



SPECIAL REPORT

19

▲ 06 ▼

www.spin.co.uk

FOUNDED
1992

LOCATION
WANDSWORTH,
SOUTH LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 2

Things have been going well at Spin this year, says partner Tony Brook: "I have to pinch myself. I'm very fortunate. Big changes include moving studio, Claudia Klat becoming a partner was a definite highlight, and the continued success of publishing venture Unit Editions." Looking ahead, Brook sees Brexit as bad news, although none of the studio's international staff are currently from EU countries, which he believes will minimise the effect on the team. Spin's main challenge of 2018? "Keep standards at the highest level, keep the work fresh, exciting and relevant, and our clients happy."



20

NEW ENTRY

www.taxistudio.co.uk

FOUNDED
2002

LOCATION
BRISTOL

NUMBER OF STAFF



NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 12

T A X I

S T U D I O



"Emotionally speaking, the last 12 months have seen us go from a major low to a major high," says Taxi Studio's creative partner and co-founder Spencer Buck. "Last summer was a sad time for us; we were forced to lose some great people due to a sudden, unforeseen downturn in business. However since then we've bounced back, and then some; this year has turned out to be our biggest to date. Our senior management team, in particular, are absolutely smashing it, the awards we've won this year have put broad smiles on our faces, and receiving recognition from our peers in this list is incredibly satisfying, too."



21

RE-ENTRY

www.studiomyerscough.comFOUNDED
1993LOCATION
HOXTON, EAST
LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF

S T U D I O
M Y E R S C O U G H

Studio Myerscough is the one-person studio of Morag Myerscough, who's spent 2017 working non-stop working on a variety of projects. These included the permanent exhibition Designer Maker User, which she's been working on for five years; 65m of 'mood tweets' for a hospital in Sweden; her first permanent public art project for Battersea Power station; and transforming the cafe at the Bernie Grant Centre in Tottenham. Another highlight has been completing two large temporary installations with collaborator Luke Morgan: Superhot in Romania and Joy & Peace for the Culture Mile, Smithfield and the Barbican, which ran until mid-October.

22

RE-ENTRY



W O L F F O L I N S

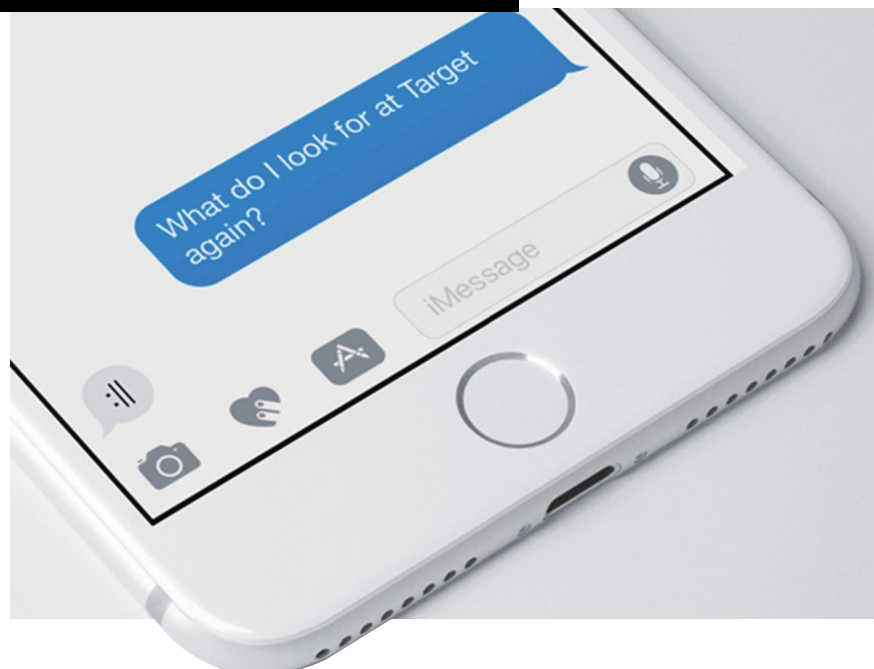
dotdot

www.wolffolins.comFOUNDED
1965LOCATION
NOTTING HILL,
WEST LONDON;
PLUS NEW YORK,
SAN FRANCISCO

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 24

It's been a significant year for Wolff Olins, says chief design officer Chris Moody. "Both in New York and the UK, we've seen some of our younger designers flourish. The studios feel vibrant and reinvigorated. It feels like we have a new squad with some new ways of making an impact." The biggest challenge of 2018, he feels, will be "small 'c' conservatism and risk aversion, as we face uncertain and economically challenging times. We must keep reminding ourselves that seismic political and economic changes make fertile ground for radical and innovative work."



SPECIAL REPORT

23
NEW ENTRY

W H Y N O T
A S S O C I A T E S



www.whynotassociates.com

FOUNDED
1987

LOCATION
SHOREDITCH,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 1

Why Not Associates is celebrating its 30th year. “And as with every previous year, this has been different to all the others,” says partner Andy Altmann. “As ever, the projects we’ve been involved in have been quite diverse, from large museums to books for artists, through to new public art commissions, while the biggest highlight was directing The Telegraph newspaper’s new TV commercial.” Asked why he thinks WNA was voted onto our list, he suggests it might lie in “the breadth of the projects we get involved in, or our love of experimenting with typography in all its forms.”



24
NEW ENTRY

B U I L D



www.wearebuild.com

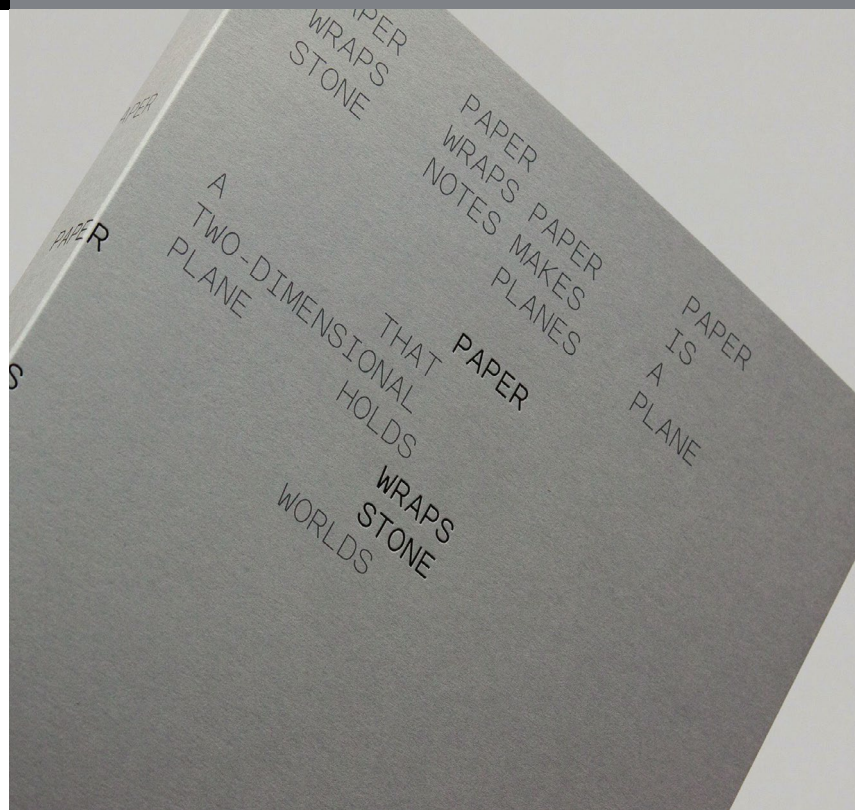
FOUNDED
2001

LOCATION
LEEDS

NUMBER OF STAFF



NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 1



According to creative director Michael C Place, Build had a slow start to the year, “but a good solid middle, and hopefully a strong finish,” he smiles. “We are still getting our head round being back up north, and working with the likes of Google seems like a great validation that location doesn’t matter; doing good work is what it’s all about.” Other highlights have included winning the winning the pitch to brand The Great Exhibition of the North, against 32 other Northern agencies. “We’re incredibly passionate about representing and promoting design here in the north, so to be given this opportunity is very exciting.”

25

▲ 14 ▼

www.madebysawdust.co.ukFOUNDED
2006LOCATION
SHOREDITCH,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



S A W D U S T

START

2017 has been a time of renewal for two-man studio Sawdust, says founder Rob Gonzalez. "We've busied ourselves learning new software, and lots of extra plug-ins, while continuing to work on commercial briefs. We decided to undertake fewer talks this year so we could focus on both of these." The highlight has been working with Converse. "They're great people and a fantastic company to work for," says Gonzalez. "We also worked with ManvsMachine this year. It's always good to work with people who are pushing the bar, and that you have a great deal of respect for."

26

NEW ENTRY

www.studiomoross.comFOUNDED
2012LOCATION
STOCKWELL,
SOUTH LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 5S T U D I O
M O R O S S

Studio Moross has developed a keen interest in broadcast design, its founder and director, Kate Moross, reveals. They've also been doing more work internationally, including Japan, and have expanded their team accordingly. It hasn't all been plain sailing, though. "I fell and broke my hand in January, and my staff were an amazing support to me when I wasn't able to work," she explains. The coming year will see the opening of Studio Moross USA. "I'm looking forward to the challenge of having a studio on the other side of the Atlantic, whilst keeping London as my home base," says Moross.

SPECIAL REPORT

27

▲ 11 ▼

www.universaleverything.com

FOUNDED
2004

LOCATION
SHEFFIELD AND
LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF



NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 1

The last 12 months have been “all over the place” for Universal Everything, says owner and creative director Matt Pyke. “We released a product, OpClock; created a Twitter visualisation for supercomputers; predicted what’s coming next with film series Screens of the Future, and brought AI to life for IBM Watson.” His highlight was “working with childhood idols Zaha Hadid Architects to launch the Samsung Galaxy S8.” But Brexit has been a downer: “We’ve lost the chance to hire some fantastic European creatives based in the UK because of uncertainty over their future here,” he adds.



28

▲ EQUAL ▼

www.turnerduckworth.com

FOUNDED
1992

LOCATION
KENSINGTON,
WEST LONDON;
SAN FRANCISCO

NUMBER OF STAFF



NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 20

T U R N E R
D U C K W O R T H



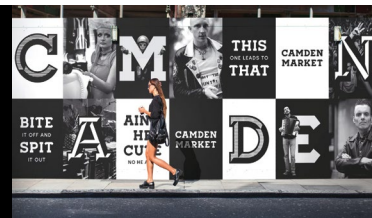
“We’ve seen design become more and more important in the rapidly shifting world of communications, and design excellence more and more valued as a true differentiator,” says joint CEO and CCO David Turner. The company has benefited from these trends. “All three studios are growing, and we’ve moved to a new, bigger studio in London.” They’re flattered to be picked by their peers for this list: “It’s important for the same reason that awards are important,” says Turner. “It’s easy to believe your own publicity, but when your peers judge your work, you get an informed, objective opinion.”

29

NEW ENTRY

R A G G E D
E D G E
www.raggededge.com
FOUNDED
2007LOCATION
CLERKENWELL,
CENTRAL LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 6

"We aim to get better every day, and the past year has been no different," says Ragged Edge co-founder Max Ottignon. "We've continued to push ourselves and become a better branding agency as a result." The year's highlight has been the rebrand of Camden Market. "To see it being so well received by the design community was hugely satisfying," adds Ottignon. "It felt like a stake in the ground for the whole agency." Ragged Edge has also been working with a number of start-ups. "You'll start to see some of that work as it launches over the next few months," he adds.

30

NEW ENTRY

D N & C O


www.dnco.com
FOUNDED
2006LOCATION
BERMONDSEY,
SOUTH LONDON

NUMBER OF STAFF

NEW HIRES
THIS YEAR 0

"It's incredibly rewarding to be honoured by our peers in this list, says founder Joy Nazzari. "Especially given that a lot of the brands we work with are often not household names or sexy consumer products." A highlight of 2017 has been the studio's work for the V&A's new Exhibition Road Quarter, followed by the exhibition and book, Otl Aicher's Isy, celebrating the designer's vision for this small German town. Meanwhile, the team's quirkiest project was a podcast in White City Place, and commissioning Fathom Architects to build a mobile four-person recording studio.



SPECIAL REPORT

31

NEW ENTRY



www.nomadstudio.com

FOUNDED 2016

LOCATION
WHITECHAPEL,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



N O M A D
S T U D I O

"Last year it was really all about survival," contemplates Stuart Watson, partner and creative director of Nomad Studio. "This year it's going to be all about the work: launching Sky Sports in partnership with Sky Creative. It was a pretty tough ask for a small studio, but we've made it work and we're really proud of the team."

sky sports



32

NEW ENTRY

www.zakgroup.co.uk

FOUNDED 2005

LOCATION
CANONBURY,
NORTH LONDON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



FAUST

TEXT KATALOG PRESSE TEAM DANK

18.05.17, 10-12:30 TEXT

IM SOLIDISTISCHEN CHOR
SUSANNE PFEFFER

Ein Raum, ein Haus, ein Pavillon, eine Institution, ein Staat. Fließend, Kristallin und hart durchziehen Glasboden und Glaswände wie in den Machtzentren des Geldes den Raum. Raumgrenzen, die zugleich offenlegen und permanent alles sichtbar und kontrollierbar machen. Der erhöhte Boden hebt die Körper an und verändert die Proportionen des Raums. Unter, neben und über uns sind Körper Einzelner und Vieler. Erhöhen wie erniedrigen bewegen sich die Performer durch, unter und auf dem Pavillon. Auf frei stehenden gläsernen Podesten stehen oder hocken sie wie schwebend an den Wänden der Räume - Körper, Skulptur und Ware zugleich. Unversehens befinden wir uns in einer Konstruktion von Macht und Ohnmacht, Willkür und Gewalt, Widerstand und Freiheit. Draußen, im eigenen Territorium, bewachen die Hunde das Haus.

Der Schrei verstummt unter dem verzögerten Schlag der eigenen Hand. Die vermeintliche Umarmung erstarrt im stillen Kampf der angespannten Kräfte. Dampf verhält der Schlag der Faust auf der Brust und lässt den Arm mechanisch zurückschnellen. Gegen das Glas gepresst, verformen sich die Körper bis zur Unkenntlichkeit zu einer fleischigen Masse. Die Hand befriedigt autark und still das eigene Geschlecht. Die Körper der Performer sind auf das nackte Leben reduziert. Sie lassen sich anhand ihrer Sexualökonomie analysieren. Masturbation als Regression und Widerstand, als Tod der Sexualität und zugleich als Bild einer Sexualität, die allein dem visuellen Konsum dient. Lust entsteht nicht im sexuellen Akt, sondern im Akt des Sehens und Gesehenwerdens. Die stummen Schreie zeugen von Schmerz des zunehmenden Verschwindens des Lebendigen, der Zonialisierung des kapitalisierten Körpers. Die dualistische Konstruktion, die Grenze zwischen kapitalisiertem Subjekt und kapitalisiertem Objekt, scheint aufgelöst. Wie aber agiert die Macht, wenn sie sich von den Subjekten

Z A K
G R O U P



"2017 has all been about us expanding our work in the digital field," says Zak Group director, Zak Kyes. "Right now, we're in the process of developing a flagship digital platform for M+, the museum of visual culture in Hong Kong, as well as the website for the renowned German art school, Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main."

33

▲ 25 ▼

www.nbstudio.co.uk

FOUNDED 1997

LOCATION
SOUTHWARK,
SOUTH LONDON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



N B S T U D I O

Nick Finney, co-founder and creative director of NB Studio, sees the last 12 months as a mixed bag: "Battles were won, lost and drawn," he says. "Talented people left and talented people joined. Clients were wowed and records were beaten." And the biggest highlight? "Virtual reality landed in the studio and it's an exciting project," he enthuses.

ORE



34

▲ 07 ▼

www.studiomakgill.com

FOUNDED 2007

LOCATION
BRIGHTON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



S T U D I O
M A K G I L L



"During 2017, it's felt like we've had to hold on really tight at times, but as long as you enjoy the moments of calm, all is okay," says Hamish Makgill, creative director and founder of this Brighton-based agency. "The biggest highlight of the year was two massive projects landing in the studio on the same day."

35

NEW ENTRY

www.designbridge.com

FOUNDED 1986

LOCATION
CLERKENWELL,
CENTRAL LONDON;
PLUS 3 MORE OFFICES

NUMBER
OF STAFF



D E S I G N
B R I D G E

“Our new global brand identity for Hellmann’s launched in March this year, and we’re now seeing it applied to all brand communications and touchpoints,” says Design Bridge’s group brand guardian Birgitte Woehlke. Also this year, CCO Graham Shearsby has been appointed as a D&AD trustee, and the agency has been acquired by WPP.



36

NEW ENTRY

www.bandb-studio.co.uk

FOUNDED 2009

LOCATION
SHOREDITCH,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



B & B
S T U D I O

“2017 has felt like a year when we’ve been attracting the right sort of clients,” reflects B&B creative partner Shaun Bowen. “Brands that aren’t afraid to be challenging, like BrewDog. Brands that are willing to be challenged like Higgidy and Firefly. Brands that are defined by their ethical purpose, like Snact and Kit & Kin.”

37

NEW ENTRY

www.commission.studio

FOUNDED 2013

LOCATION
PECKHAM,
SOUTH LONDON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



C O M M I S S I O N
S T U D I O

“In 2017 we’ve worked with fashion brands like & Other Stories and Léon Bara, speciality coffee brands Volcano and Old Spike, luxury goods companies LVMH, Rimowa, and Moët Hennessy,” says co-founder and creative director Christopher Moorby. “Working across lots of industries keeps things interesting and we also often get to cross-pollinate.”



38

RE-ENTRY

www.rosedesign.co.uk

FOUNDED 1999

LOCATION
ROTHERHITHE,
SOUTH LONDON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



R O S E
D E S I G N

“Despite the political climate, we’ve had an exciting, challenging, yet ultimately rewarding year,” says Simon Elliott, owner and creative partner at Rose Design. Highlights have included launching its long-awaited new website, and publication design work for the 2017 Islamic Solidarity Games held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

39

NEW ENTRY



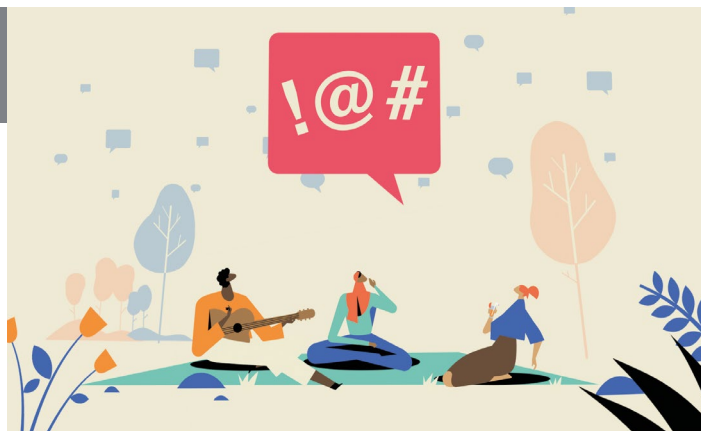
M O T H

www.moth.studio

FOUNDED 2015

LOCATION
HACKNEY,
EAST LONDONNUMBER
OF STAFF

"This year has been a landmark for Moth, says producer Ifor Ashton. "We recently made a big shift from being a collective to a full-time production studio, and that really came to fruition in 2017. We were also lucky to spend a lot of time in New York earlier and work directly with Facebook on a big rebrand."

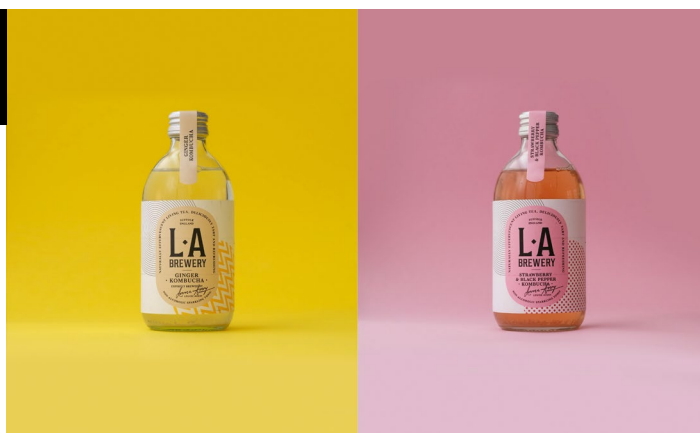


40

▲ 16 ▼

www.heredesign.co.uk

FOUNDED 2006

LOCATION
HACKNEY,
EAST LONDONNUMBER
OF STAFFH E R E
D E S I G N

"The projects that stand out in 2017 are those unexpected enquiries," says creative partner at Here Design, Caz Hildebrand. "A kombucha brewery in Suffolk, barista training for young offenders, a book on the joys of punctuation. Going into 2018, we're planning to redesign our own company structure, to better reflect all the diverse things we work on."

41

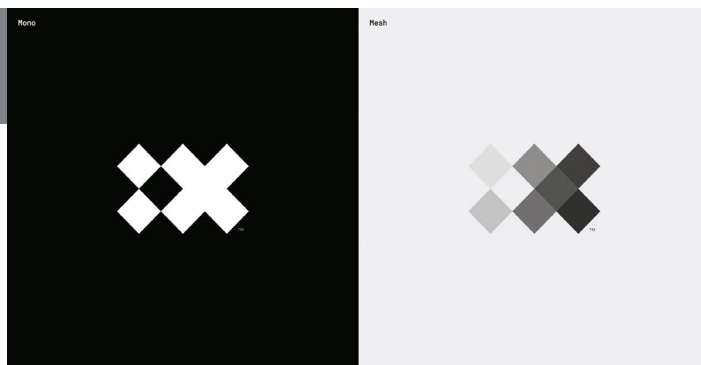
RE-ENTRY

M O V I N G
B R A N D S
www.movingbrands.com

FOUNDED 1998

LOCATION
SHOREDITCH, EAST
LONDON; PLUS 3
MORE OFFICESNUMBER
OF STAFF

"We're working in a whirlwind of huge technological leaps and cultural shifts," says John Faye, UK/EU marketing manager at Moving Brands. "In 2017, we've been partnering with some incredible leaders, entrepreneurs and organisations, such as IBM i; and we've taken time to boost learning and empower teams."

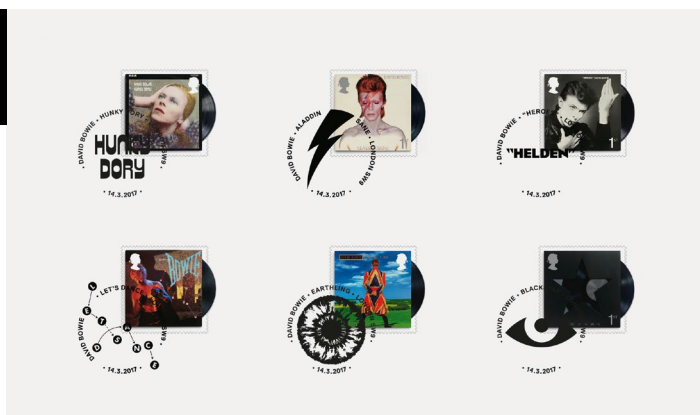
International Business Machines™
Brand Experience & Design

42

NEW ENTRY


www.supplestudio.com

FOUNDED 2013

LOCATION
BATHNUMBER
OF STAFFS U P P L E
S T U D I O

"This year has seen Supple Studio pass a number of milestones, says creative director Jamie Ellul. "May gave us our first D&AD Pencil. In July, we moved to a beautiful, three-floor studio. And designing the products and collectibles for the Royal Mail's David Bowie stamp issue was a dream come true."

43

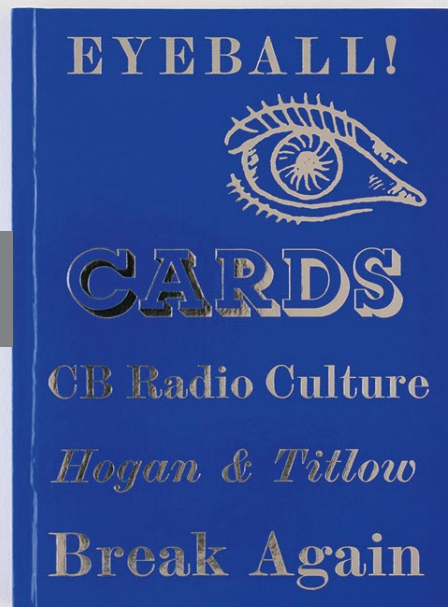
▲ 29 ▼

www.morganstudio.co.uk

FOUNDED 2000

LOCATION
THE STRAND,
CENTRAL LONDONNUMBER
OF STAFFJ O H N M O R G A N
S T U D I O

The scope and reach of John Morgan Studio extended further in 2017, as its titular founder began a professorship at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. The year's biggest highlight was the launch of Four Corners Irregulars, a new series of books about modern British visual history, while 2018 will see the studio launch a new type foundry.



44

NEW ENTRY

www.lovecreative.com

FOUNDED 2001

LOCATION
MANCHESTERNUMBER
OF STAFFL O V E
C R E A T I V E

"In the last 12 months we've seen our brand and packaging reset for Häagen-Dazs go live, as well as our latest packaging work for Haig Club, known as The Clubman," says executive creative director David Palmer. "We've also expanded the business onto two floors and picked up a whole bunch of awards."

45

RE-ENTRY

www.pearlfisher.com

FOUNDED 1992

LOCATION
HAMMERSMITH,
WEST LONDON; PLUS
3 MORE OFFICESNUMBER
OF STAFF

P E A R L F I S H E R

"In 2017, we're celebrating one of the best financial performances of recent years," says founding partner and CEO of Pearlfisher, Jonathan Ford. "Highlights included rebrands of iconic tea and coffee brand Taylors of Harrogate, audio lifestyle brand B&O Play and art product brand Reeves – its first major rebrand in 250 years."



46

NEW ENTRY

www.sb-studio.co.uk

FOUNDED 2009

LOCATION
LIVERPOOL
AND LONDONNUMBER
OF STAFFS B
S T U D I O

"The past year's flown by," says Benji Holroyd, creative director at SB Studio. "Our highlight has been the full renaming and rebrand of Innovators Hub, now affectionately known as OH. The first product of our design sprint process, all in one week. Fast, relevant, no BS and a beautiful result."

SPECIAL REPORT

47

NEW ENTRY

www.julia.uk.com

FOUNDED 2008

LOCATION
HACKNEY, EAST
LONDON; ROME

NUMBER
OF STAFF



J U L I A



Julia is a small London studio making its first appearance on our list this year. “We’ve been working with well-regarded institutions, that’s probably increased our exposure a bit,” reasons co-founder Hugo Timm. The studio has also just opened an office in Rome and plans to do the same in Paris in 2018, the year of its 10th anniversary.



48

▲ 42 ▼

www.magpie-studio.com

FOUNDED 2008

LOCATION
SHOREDITCH,
EAST LONDON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



M A G P I E

“Demand’s been high for Magpie’s services in 2017,” says co-founder David Azurdia. “Having worked so hard to keep the quality of our work so high, it’s really nice to feel as though people value it.” And he’s optimistic about 2018, despite Brexit. “As bleak as it’s all looking, we’re creative thinkers: we adapt and survive.”

49

▲ 26 ▼

www.gbhlondon.com

FOUNDED 1999

LOCATION
CHISWICK,
WEST LONDON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



G B H

GBH co-founder Peter Hale cites two big highlights for the agency in 2017. “Firstly launching the GBH book, Charm, Belligerence and Diversity, celebrating almost 20 years of working together,” he says. “Secondly, working with Vincross, a fanatical team of Chinese entrepreneurs and developers in Beijing on a robotics project called HEXA.

HEX A
POWERED BY YOU



50

NEW ENTRY

www.togetherdesign.co.uk

FOUNDED 2003

LOCATION
FITZROVIA,
CENTRAL LONDON

NUMBER
OF STAFF



T O G E T H E R
D E S I G N

The last 12 months have been a period of consolidation at Together, says brand planner Robin Kadrnka. “We won a number of design awards for different clients, and we were excited to maintain the variety of projects that we enjoy so much, including London’s Eat 17 store and restaurant chain.”

THANKS TO OUR PANEL

Over 80 top designers and creative directors from across the country contributed their nominations to decide CA's UK Studio Rankings 2017

Duan Evans
AKQA, London
www.akqa.com

Tommy Taylor
Alphabetical, London
www.alphabeticalstudio.com

Tom Judd
Animade, London
www.animade.tv

Kirsty Carter and Emma Thomas
APFEL, London
www.apracticeforeverydaylife.com

Mike Moloney
Art & Graft, London
www.artandgraft.com

Sally Hope
Arts University Bournemouth, Bournemouth
www.aub.ac.uk

Nick Asbury
Asbury & Asbury, London
www.asburyandasbury.com

Lee Bradley
B&W Studio, Leeds
www.bandwstudio.co.uk

David Woods
Bag of Bees, Belfast
www.bagofbees.co.uk

Matt Baxter
Baxter & Bailey, Brighton
www.baxterandbailey.co.uk

Louise Sloper
BBH, London
www.bartleoglehegarty.com

Blair Thomson
Believe In, Exeter
www.believein.net

Tim Beard
Bibliotheque, London
www.bibliothequedesign.com

Mike Bond
Bond & Coyne, London
www.bondandcoyne.co.uk

Paul Taylor
BrandOpus, London
www.brandopus.com

David Jones
Buddy Creative, Exeter
www.buddycreative.com

Michael C Place
Build, Leeds
www.wearebuild.com

Rebecca Wright
Central Saint Martins, London
www.arts.ac.uk/csm

Dilys Maliby
Circus, London
www.circuslondon.com

James Littlewood
Design Project, Leeds
www.designproject.co.uk

Ben Wright
DesignStudio, London
www.wearedesignstudio.com

Fiona Curran
Distil Studio, London
www.distilstudio.co.uk

Aporva Baxi
DixonBaxi, London
www.dixonbaxi.com

Myrna McLeod
Edinburgh Napier University, Edinburgh
www.napier.ac.uk

Andy Lawrence
Elmwood, Leeds
www.elmwood.com

Ben Steers
Fiasco, Bristol
www.fiascodesign.co.uk

Mark Bonner
GBH, London
www.gbh.london

Gilmar Wendt
GW+Co, London
www.gilmarwendt.com

Kyle Wilkinson
Hacksaw, Barnsley
www.hacksawstudio.com

Paul Willoughby
Human After All, London
www.humanafterall.co.uk

Nick Bax
Human Studio, Sheffield
www.humanstudio.com

Sue Daun
Interbrand, London
www.interbrand.com

Jack Renwick
Jack Renwick Studio, London
www.jackrenwickstudio.com

Graeme McGowan
JamHot, Glasgow
www.thisisjamhot.com

Michael Johnson
Johnson Banks, London
www.johnsonbanks.co.uk

Sean Thomas
Jones Knowles Ritchie, London
www.jkrglobal.com

Laura Haines
Kingston University, London
www.kingston.ac.uk

Amber Smith
Leeds College of Art, Leeds
www.leeds-art.ac.uk

David Airey
Logo Design Love, Bangor
www.logodesignlove.com

Craig Burston
London College of Communication, London
www.arts.ac.uk/lcc

Edward Maddison
Maddison Graphic, Norwich
www.maddisongraphic.com

William Owen
Made By Many, London
www.madebymany.com

David Azurdia
Magpie, London
www.magpie-studio.com

Mike Alderson
ManvsMachine, London
www.manvsmachine.co.uk

Mark Lester
Mark Studio, Manchester
www.markstudio.co.uk

Laura Jordan-Bambach
Mr President, London
www.mr-president.co.uk

Ben Brookbanks
MultiAdapter, London
www.multiadaptor.com

Adam Rix
Music, Manchester
www.ideasbymusic.com

Bob Mytton
Mytton Williams, Bath
www.myttonwilliams.co.uk

Alan Dye and team
NB Studio, London
www.nbstudio.co.uk

Stephen Gilmore
North, London
www.northdesign.co.uk

Lucy Blazey
Norwich University of the Arts, Norwich
www.nua.ac.uk

Craig Oldham
Office of Craig Oldham, Manchester
www.craigoldham.co.uk

Jonathan Ford
Pearlfisher, London
www.pearlfisher.com

Marina Willer
Pentagram, London
www.pentagram.com

Neil Leonard
Plymouth College of Art, Plymouth
www.plymouthart.ac.uk

Simon Elliott and Garry Blackburn
Rose Design, London
www.rosedesign.co.uk

Rob Gonzalez
Sawdust, London
www.madebysawdust.co.uk

Benji Holroyd
SB Studio, Liverpool
www.sb-studio.co.uk

Bryan Edmondson
SEA Design, London
www.seadesign.co.uk

Matt Rice
Sennep, London
www.sennep.com

Pam Bowman
Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield
www.shu.ac.uk

Simon Manchipp
Someone, London
www.someoneinlondon.com

Tony Brook
Spin, London
www.spin.co.uk

Sunita Yeomans
SSHY Creative, Olney
www.sshy.co.uk

Hamish Makgill
Studio Makgill, Brighton
www.studiomakgill.com

Dan Moore
Studio Output, London
www.studio-output.com

David Hitner
Studio Small, London
www.studiosmall.com

Jim Sutherland
Studio Sutherland, London
www.studio-sutherland.co.uk

Jamie Ellul
Supple Studio, Bath
www.supplestudio.com

Andrew Stevenson
Tangent Graphic, Glasgow
www.tangentgraphic.co.uk

Spencer Buck
Taxi Studio, Bristol
www.taxistudio.co.uk

Stuart Youngs
Texture, London
www.studiotexture.co.uk

Adam Cale
The Allotment, London
www.theallotment.co

Richard Scholey
The Chase, Manchester
www.thechase.co.uk

Costas Millas, James Hanson and Su Foster
The One Off, Derbyshire
www.theoneoff.com

Greg Quinton and Kath Tudball
The Partners, London
www.the-partners.com

Ady Bibby
True North, Manchester
www.thisistruenorth.co.uk

Dan Greene
Wolff Olins, London
www.wolffolins.com

This six-part series is an essential guide for junior designers. We give advice on topics entry-level creatives need to know about, from basic theory to practical tips. In part three of the series, we examine the world of artworking. Subscribe to make sure you get the rest of the set, see page 32.

DESIGN MATTERS

JUNIOR DESIGNER MANUAL

SMARTER ARTWORKING

In part three of our junior designer series, we look at artworking: and how this meticulous, technical art has far more to it than you might imagine

WORDS: Tom May

The term 'artworker' can mean different things to different people. But in general, it's more of a technical, detail-oriented role than that of an illustrator or graphic designer, both of which are more focused on conceptual ideas and creativity.

An artworker, in turn, will take those creative design concepts and edit and rework them, format them, and then package them into a finished piece of work. This usually involves such tasks as adjusting colours, tweaking typography, addressing inconsistencies, correcting spelling and grammar, and getting files print-ready.

Note though, that artworking isn't just done by those with an official 'artworker' title. Even if you're a 'junior designer', the chances are you'll get handed a lot of artworking tasks.

DAILY ARTWORKING

Dane Beasley, artworker at Hogarth Worldwide in London, offers an insight into what day-to-day life of an artworker looks like. "We work on editing documents that have already had the creative and design signed off," he explains. "We then use the rules of the client to implement a far stricter layout.

"Headlines, body copy, logos and imagery should all be working together in a way that respects the client's brand guidelines and the print specifications. Everything should be aligned, with no widows at the end of paragraphs. The copy should be tracked to fit within the space required. In short, we're the middlemen between creative and design."

Artworking is usually highly formalised. At Birmingham agency LIFE, everyone has an artwork spec sheet for every job. "It's a basic guide and means nothing is missed," explains Glynn Harvey, creative artwork group head at LIFE. "You read it constantly as you artwork a job and then again before you do a PDF to print. It's vital to read, read and read again."

You also need to keep communicating throughout the process, he adds. "As most jobs are time pressured, it's important everyone with a stake in the job knows and understands what stage it's at, and how much resource is required to get it to the printers."

That final stage, preparing files for print, is of crucial importance, says Elizabeth Lennon, artworker at Hogarth Worldwide. "I'd typically check that the artwork matches the print spec and the page size is correct with bleed on



PRO INSIGHT

HOW TO PREPARE A FILE FOR PRINT

JODY BURSON, ARTWORKER AT WIEDEN+KENNEDY LONDON, WALKS US THROUGH HER PROCESS FOR GETTING FILES PRINT-READY



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In short, artworkers are the middlemen between creative and design

“At Wieden+Kennedy London, when preparing an artwork file for print, I start with an approved file from the design team. I make several rounds of minor amends – copy and image updates, such as edits to the headline or adding retouched images.

Once I receive final sign-off internally and from the client, I prepare the artwork file according to job specifications defined by the design or media channel booking. This usually includes checking the resolution and colour space, so for a print job we ensure the image is a minimum of 300dpi and in the CMYK colour space.

I then set the document up to specification, making sure the document size, bleed, trim and copy safe area are correct. To ensure the artwork is colour accurate, I print a colour-certified proof to be signed off by the necessary parties.

For press and out-of-home campaigns, I will adapt the master artwork to suit specific media bookings. For example, if I'm adapting a press ad for Sainsbury's, I receive different sizes and specifications for each newspaper and adapt the file while being careful to keep the overall look and feel as close to the master layout as possible.

Once adapted, files are then packaged up (collecting the individual assets, layout files, fonts, graphics, images) or formatted to a particular file type, according to the printer's requirements. We then supply to the printers or production partner ready to print.”

BALANCING PRINT

“The Three Holiday Spam campaign centered around people bragging via holiday snaps,” explains Jody Burson. “As this was for print, the files were created in InDesign in the CMYK colour space. All images had to be a minimum of 300dpi and in the correct colour space. Colour adjustments were made so that the execution felt balanced and some of the duller images still popped. It was important that the white space between the images was consistent and exact and that the copy sizing, leading and tracking adhered to Three's brand guidelines. I also ensured the T&Cs, hashtags and URLs were correct.”



WORKING TOGETHER

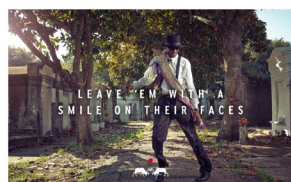
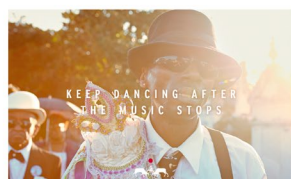
"While working as an artworker under Hogarth, I've had the opportunity to work with an array of brands," says Dane Beasley. "In the lead up to Christmas, this will increase as more work comes into the studio. The bulk of the documents I'm involved in are brand internal communications, so brochures and research documents across an array of different markets. My daily tasks range from minor copy changes, text positioning, removing unwanted letters and spaces to resizing documents, delivery checks, print/proof checks and creating first-stage artworks. Within our team we have our work assigned to us on a schedule, so if one of us is very busy we move the work around and help each other with any queries or issues. We have a quality control team with us in the office, so we're able to talk freely if something needs to be checked before putting it through the system. It's a very comfortable environment, even when it gets busy. We keep in mind that we're all in this together and always offer friendly guidance if needed."

images," she explains. "I'd check the correct fonts are being used and give a quick overview of line endings. If the file has cutter and fold guides, I'd check these work correctly, but if unsure, I'd create a mock-up."

"I'd also check that any spot colours will print correctly and check the colour separations in Acrobat. I'd then package the open artwork and print PDF, ready to send on through to the printer or to the client."

There are a number of standard tasks you perform every time you prepare files for print, says Michele Stocks, in-house designer for PR agency Nelson Bostock. "For instance, you make sure everything's in CMYK, and that there's at least 3mm bleed. You make sure all the artwork and important information is housed within the set margins. If you haven't done this, you risk your text, artwork or logos being cut off by the cropping process, or for white lines to show around the edges of your pages because you didn't have any bleed on it."

There's also a lot of back and forth involved, she adds. "You'll often have to liaise with the printers – or the clients if they're having it printed themselves – to make sure you understand the nuances of how they want it printed. For example, with one client I have to have a specific amount of colour density,



GOING SOCIAL

"The FINLANDIA social media campaign was based around outstanding characters whose combined ages made 1,000 years," says Jody Burson. "I had to create individual posts for Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, taking into account how they could work across all three platforms. The files were set up in the RGB colour space and all images had to be in RGB too. I made minor adjustments to graded images to ensure the copy was legible on such busy backgrounds. I also cropped the images and considered the logo's placement so it was consistent, adhered to brand guidelines and would be prominent enough on all types of devices."

FIVE ARTWORKING TIPS

OUR ARTWORKERS SHARE TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR WORKFLOW

1 COMMUNICATION IS KEY

"I'd advise any new designer to communicate properly with the print company," says Kayleigh Cripps, marketing graphic designer at Find Me a Gift. "Every printer is different, and they all have their own set of guidelines: don't just assume they all expect a 3mm bleed! Allow yourself extra time for error, and don't rush."

2 DO A TEST PRINT FIRST

"I'd also strongly recommend doing a test print first too, especially if you're producing brochures, booklets, or anything else where you'll be printing a large quantity," adds Cripps. "It will save you time, and money, in the long run."

3 UNDERSTAND YOUR TOOLS

"Creative suites are continually updated, so you will never know everything there is to know about a single program, like InDesign," says Jody Burson, artworker at Wieden+Kennedy London. "But the more you practise, the more you will discover easier and quicker ways of working."

4 SEEK ADVICE FROM COLLEAGUES

"Don't be afraid to ask questions," adds Burson. "Most of what I've learned has been from continually speaking to those around me and always asking questions. There are always multiple ways of achieving the same result. By speaking to others you'll discover the most efficient."

5 GET INTO A FLOW

"Learn to focus and be methodical, as you'll need a keen eye for detail," says Dane Beasley, artworker at Hogarth Worldwide in London. "Feel the flow of the work and you'll fall right into it. It can be robotic, especially handling a large amount of files, so start slow and then you'll flow into the work a lot smoother and faster."

The work is often meticulous, but there are often opportunities to be creative and free

because their paper is so thin, you can't have too much colour or it won't look right."

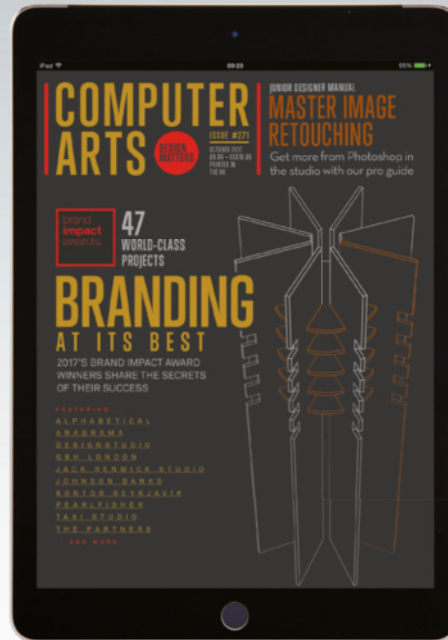
It's also about having a wider appreciation of what the design is aiming to achieve, points out Jody Burson, artworker at Wieden+Kennedy London. "Whatever job you're working on, it's essential to know where it will sit in the world," she says. "There are different considerations when artworking a print job for a billboard poster rather than a digital file for social media or a piece of 3D packaging. Plus you always need to refer to the client's brand guidelines to ensure you're adhering to their requirements."

In summary, artworking is not just a narrow technical role, but something that should draw on the broad range of your design knowledge and creative skills. "The work is often fairly meticulous, but there are also opportunities to be creative and free," stresses Burson. "Every job I work on challenges me and gives me new opportunities to learn."

Glynn Harvey concurs. "It's not just sitting in front of a screen resizing ads, which is what I once thought an artworker did," he says. "You take the big creative idea and use your knowledge and experience to not only point out what can't be achieved, but to enhance projects and add that wow factor, especially with print finishes and cutter guides." ■

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- Why we need more diversity in design
- DixonBaxi on why it pays to be restless



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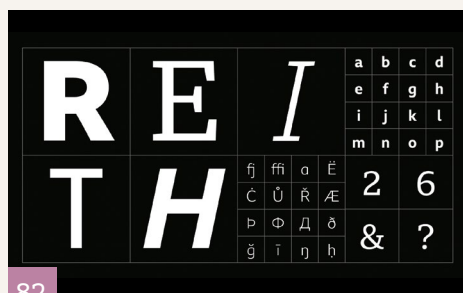
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VIDEO INSIGHT

HOW TO RUN A MORE EFFICIENT STUDIO

Locket Aebischer and Dan Moore – from busy London agencies SomeOne and Studio Output respectively – discuss how they manage studio resource, in association with Resource Guru.



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NEW TYPEFACE FOR THE BBC

Behind the scenes on Dalton Maag's painstaking development of Reith, a major new typeface for the BBC.



88

CREATE DIGITAL FASHION ILLUSTRATION

WIA-winning illustrator Rosalba Cafforio shares her digital techniques.



92

HIDDEN LAYER

How art meets artificial intelligence in this ambitious self-initiated project, part of FIELD's Second Nature series.

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DAN MOORE

Dan Moore is one of the founding partners of Studio Output and Found Studio. As managing director, he is ultimately responsible for the financial and organisational side of the agency, including resource management and allocation.

■ VIDEO INSIGHT

HOW TO RUN A MORE EFFICIENT STUDIO

In a video special in association with Resource Guru, London-based agencies **Studio Output** and **SomeOne** discuss how to stay on top of a busy workload



LOCKET AEBISCHER

Senior account manager Lucy 'Locket' Aebischer has worked at SomeOne for three-and-a-half years. She is one of six account managers in the agency team, which is mostly designer-focused.

Busy studios are only successful when they can handle their workload efficiently, otherwise things will go into meltdown: deadlines are missed, budgets squandered and clients lost. That's where resource management is essential.

In a special feature in association with Resource Guru, we paid a visit to two similarly sized London agencies to determine how they run things at the moment, and whether a more specialised tool could help oil the wheels...

How do you keep track of who works on what?

Locket Aebischer: A Google sheet. It's live, everyone can see it remotely, and we plan 2-3 weeks ahead. Account managers have a channel on Slack to talk about projects, and the design directors and founders have another so they can feed new business into us.

Dan Moore: We also have a big, bulky, custom-built Google sheet that includes design, strategy, copy and whoever else needs to be on it. All the permanent teams are on there, and freelancers. Projects are manually allocated across the week, normally at least four weeks in advance.

It gets looked at daily by the project director, then more formally by the producers and design directors if a pitch comes in or a project moves.

We ensure there's as much communication as possible, but you need to be flexible, as you never know what's around the corner. Our spreadsheet does the job, but it could do it better.

How accurate is your current method?

DM: We need to get better at allocating actual time from a project into actual time on resource. Generally, people know they have a resource ➤



Watch the videos on our YouTube channel: www.bit.ly/ca272-resources



KEY INFO

SomeOne

www.someoneinlondon.com

LOCATION: Shoreditch, London

CURRENT STAFF:

30 full-time in London, 3 full-time in Sydney

"It's gone up and down a bit in London when we have had bigger projects. We've had bigger teams, and when those projects come to an end, these teams leave, but they're usually just freelancers or temporary staff.

BREAKDOWN OF ROLES:

23 in design team

6 account managers

4 founding directors

FREELANCE REQUIREMENTS:

"We don't use freelancers that much, and try and keep everything in-house," explains Aebischer. "When we do, it's usually because we have an aggressive timeline and need to get the stuff out super-quick."

PROJECT WORKLOAD:

30-40 projects at one time

"It's steady throughout the year," Aebischer explains. "The only trough might be when we all jet off to Ibiza for our summer trip, but summer in general is quite busy. Some agencies are quiet in August, but we are busy all the time."

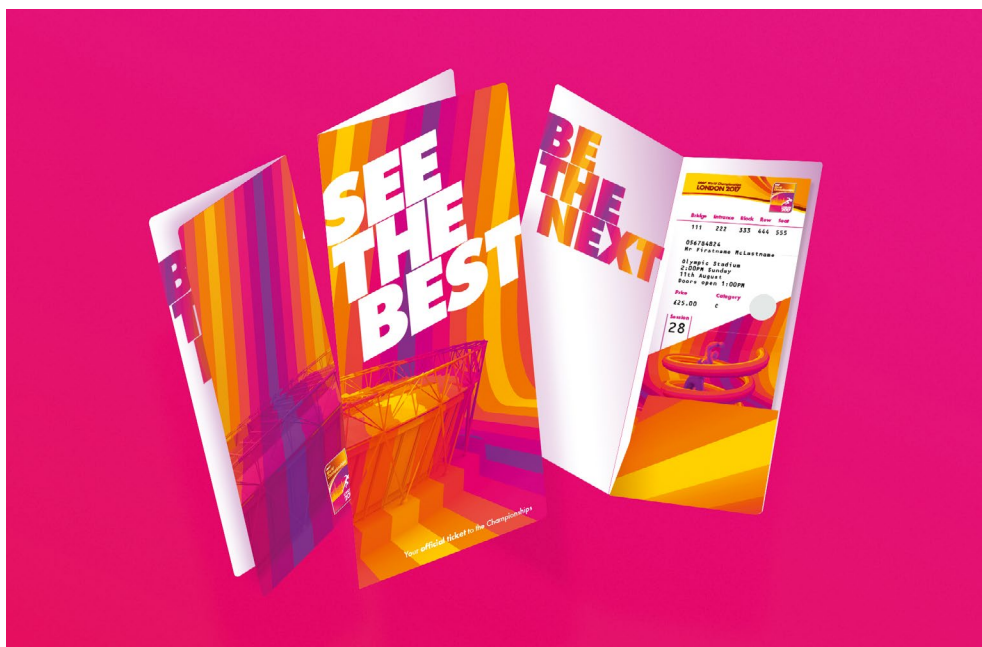


TAP TO WATCH THE VIDEO NOW



MANAGE YOUR STUDIO WORKLOAD

In our first video, Locket Aebischer, senior account manager at SomeOne, and Dan Moore, co-founder and MD of Studio Output, reveal how their respective agencies keep things running smoothly.



Above: SomeOne's branding for the London 2017 World Para Athletics Championships and IAAF World Championships spanned a dizzying array of applications, including digital advertising, animation, copywriting, mass ticket-printing and artworks to apply to the former Olympic stadium in Stratford.



allocated, but also specific tasks. Four hours means you have to get x, y, z done in that time.

When we first brought it in, the real challenge was people understanding that time has to have something at the end of it – it's not just there to be looked at. It's that balance between the creative resource understanding what there is versus being spoon-fed a bunch of stuff.

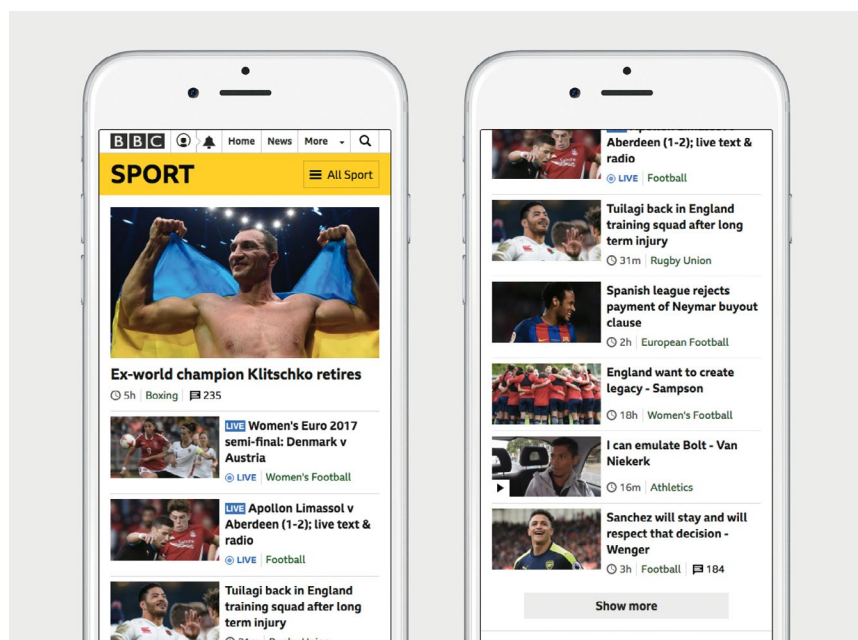
You want people to take ownership of things, but you also want that level of control from the producers. Whatever tool you use needs to be friendly and accessible, but also make sure everyone's voice is heard. Some people want to be micromanaged, others want to know what their week looks like and just get on with it.

How do you avoid clashes between projects?

LA: Usually it's quite smooth. As I said, we talk a lot on Slack if we're not in the same room, so if something comes up or there's a big issue, we can shift things around a bit. Our clients are usually super-flexible and understanding, so if we need more time, it works out okay.

Do freelancers fit into your system effectively?

DM: When we get freelancers in, it's generally to do a particular project or task, so their time is



KEY INFO

Studio Output

www.studio-output.com

LOCATION: Farringdon, London

CURRENT STAFF:

28 full-time (plus freelancers)

"At one point we had a rep in the States, 15-20 people in Beijing, and studios in Nottingham and London," explains Dan Moore. "In the last three years, we've really focused the business."

BREAKDOWN OF ROLES:

10-15 in design team inc. freelancers

4 in production

6 in admin/finance/marketing

6 within Found Studio

1 full-time on Glug events

FREELANCE REQUIREMENTS:

"For a long time, we didn't really use freelancers," admits Moore, "but over the last 2-3 years, at certain periods – particularly spring and autumn, when brands tend to spend bigger on websites or rebrands – that's when we need extra hands. It tends to be senior people, but occasionally we get in artworkers for during a roll-out. Our core team can handle After Effects, Cinema 4D and VFX stuff, and we'll supplement them as required."

PROJECT WORKLOAD:

20 on average at one time

"These really vary in size, scale and budget," reveals Moore. "Probably a third of our clients are regular spenders, so we might be doing ongoing campaigns and design support, then there'll be 1-3 big projects, such as rebrands."



PREMIER LEAGUE				
Pos	Team	Pld	GD	Pts
1	CHelsea	28	39	69
2	TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR	28	34	59
3	MANCHESTER CITY	28	24	57
4	LIVERPOOL	29	25	56
5	MANCHESTER UNITED	27	19	52
6	ARSENAL	27	22	50
7	EVERTON	29	21	50
8	WEST BROMWICH ALBION	29	1	43
9	SToke CITY	29	-9	36
10	SOUTHAMPTON	27	-3	33



easier to resource out – it's either speciality or overflow. Occasionally, we get someone in just as a pair of hands who can juggle different stuff.

Over the years, we've built up maybe three or four people who can work for us on that basis. It's like having a family member come back; they get straight into it, and know where everything is. We just make sure they know what they're doing in our twice-daily stand-ups.

LA: A lot of our freelancers are recommended by designers in the studio. They don't necessarily come with time-sheets, or stuff that an agency might give them. We have another Google sheet to plot who's available when. But if we do get a freelancer in, it's usually for a particular project so we know exactly what hours they've spent.

How do you respond to unforeseen issues?

DM: You have to be agile to stay in business, but the key is have as few unknowns as possible. If things jump out of the woodwork, it's usually because of a communication issue – whether internal or with a client.

Sometimes it gets to the point where you have to say 'no', or deal with it in a stronger way, but that's rare. Being independent means we can go down that route if we need to, but we

Above: Studio Output's rebrand of BBC Sport involved gathering feedback and securing client buy-in using an online portal. "Being based in Salford (and us in London) meant finding a smooth way of running things remotely," says Moore. "The distance and aggressive project timelines meant face-to-face meetings would have slowed us down too much."



TAP TO WATCH THE VIDEO NOW



HOW TO BE MORE AGILE AS A STUDIO

In our second video, Dan Moore and Lockett Aebischer reveal why good communication is key to avoiding unforeseen hurdles.



10 TOP TIPS FROM RESOURCEGURU

1. Don't treat people like robots

Be realistic, and remember that people don't work on billable projects from 9am to 6pm daily. Meetings, breaks and other distractions all limit the time they actually spend working.

2. Maintain existing client projects

This can take a surprising amount of time. If you don't have a separate support team, put aside some time each week for someone to take care of any issues that may arise.

3. Streamline management tasks

Keep your team up to date using dedicated resource-scheduling software.

4. Avoid over-allocating resources

This can lead to burnout and high staff turnover. If it's unavoidable, set a regular time to review and reprioritise the overbookings.

5. Don't forget about time off!

Holidays and other types of leave will impact your projects. Make sure leave management is integral to your resource scheduling.

6. Keep an eye on resource utilisation

An under-utilised team is less profitable, while consistent over-utilisation leads to burnout.

7. Don't just chuck resources at a problem

Nine women can't make a baby in a month. Onboarding new team members takes time, so it's better to spend time planning how you'll use your resources before a problem arises.

8. Set realistic expectations

Missed budgets, milestones and lead times will quickly sour your relationships.

9. Help minimise team distractions

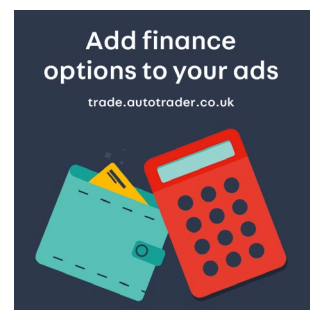
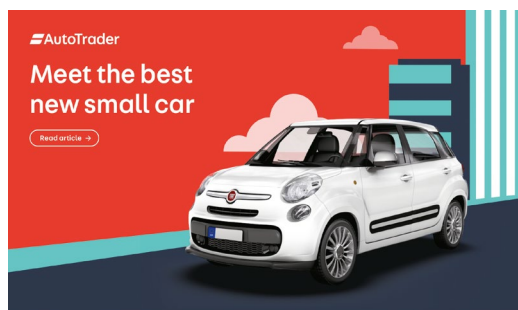
The time lost to context switching is greater than it may appear, and even a few "quick chats" can negatively impact your projects.

10. Maintain a happy team

Keep track of when people are made to work overtime, or haven't been assigned to a project they were promised. A happy studio is a more productive (and profitable) studio, after all.



TAP TO WATCH THE
VIDEO NOW



pride ourselves on great communication. When unforeseen things happen relating to health or weather, we have a tight enough team that everyone knows what's going on. People pitch in. **LA:** We're agile. If anyone's free, or their project has quietened down a bit, they'll mention it on Slack, and someone else snaps them up.

Is staff burnout ever a danger?

DM: It's always a danger, but we've tried to foster an environment where people work hard within their contracted hours. They've got a life, and come back refreshed the next day.

It's not always possible; sometimes there's more work than resource. With some projects, everyone wants to put the hours in; for others, they need to because it's not worked out for some reason. Generally there's a good balance.

Doing things at weekends is rare in terms of projects – it might happen for an event or a shoot, but we make sure the team is happy doing it, and are transparent about time off in lieu.

There are times when people do get to that burnout stage. It tends to be because they've got their head down and tried to deal with it, and not shared it. We've had to go in and say: "Look, let's talk about this. Let's work it out." If that's happening, it's on my shoulders.

LA: Overtime isn't usually a huge issue, but we have just done a 600-page book in two months, which is mad. There were definitely some late-

Above: Studio Output's rebrand of AutoTrader was run "semi-agile", as Moore puts it: "It meant organising not just our team and the client feedback, but also when the client's design team were co-working on sprints with us, in-house at their offices," he recalls. "It was as complicated as it sounds."

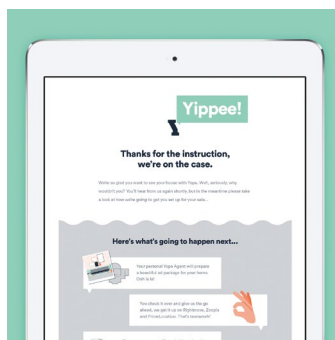
"You have to be agile to stay in business, but the key is have as few unknowns as possible."



night Deliveroos with that. Usually we're good at plotting things far enough in advance so that our timelines are fairly manageable.

Do time zones ever pose a challenge when you're working on global projects?

LA: Our international clients understand we're in London, so mostly it's fine. If it's really urgent and needs to be done out of our time zone, our Sydney office can help us out. Occasionally someone stays late, but we try to avoid it.



You have both spent some time with Resource Guru. How have you found it so far?

DM: The approach is similar: you're plotting projects on a timeline. But there are definitely time savings that will add up, and that becomes interesting. I like the way you can drag and drop, and queue up jobs – that's something we have to do manually on our Google doc.

The reporting tools are most interesting to us as an agency I think. I like how it puts more care into how resources are communicated to the people doing the job; it feels more personal for each person to have a dashboard, for instance. Some people are fine to be spoon-fed, some want the opposite, and having something like this where there is visibility is really useful.

LA: Yeah, it's super-easy to use. It's great to be able to plot actual times against people, because on our current Google sheet we only really have 'morning' and 'afternoon'. With Resource Guru, you can plot in times of day much more accurately, which has been quite helpful for scheduling meetings and so on.

Which features in Resource Guru do you think your studio would benefit from most?

LA: I think being able to see further ahead than one or two weeks would be really useful, so we can put in the deadlines of the biggest projects, and see when people have to work on them. At the moment we only do it one or two weeks ahead, which can make it harder to see the big picture. It feels like it'd be a real improvement to see meetings and deadlines all in one place, instead of having to check multiple calendars and tabs along the bar.

DM: Daily email updates are a particularly good idea. It's something we've tried to do manually over the years, and it's just dropped off.

Once there's some project data in there, I'd be keen to explore the reporting tools in more detail. The bigger we get as an agency, the fewer people have eyeballs on each individual job. We need to review things from a global view, so it's useful to have it all there at your fingertips. I think that's where tools like this are useful – they give you a real-time look at what's going on. □

Above: SomeOne's branding work for online estate agent Yopa was run on a "super-speedy" timeline, as Aebischer puts it: just six weeks from brief to delivery.

Watch the videos on our YouTube channel: www.bit.ly/ca272-resources

■ PROJECT DIARY

REITH – A NEW TYPEFACE FOR THE BBC

Type design agency **Dalton Maag** hopes its new font family for the BBC will continue to serve the corporation for the next 50 years

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PROJECT FACTFILE

BRIEF: The BBC wanted a font for everyone, which would echo its typographic legacy, while balancing contemporary form with function. With a diverse audience to cater to across a plethora of services, it needed high performance and a range of expression. The BBC commissioned a font family, starting with Latin and Cyrillic character sets, supporting almost 100 languages from day one.

CLIENT: The British Broadcasting Corporation, www.bbc.co.uk

STUDIO: Dalton Maag, www.daltonmaag.com

PROJECT DURATION: 16 months

LIVE DATE: Rollout ongoing



DAVID BAILEY
Creative director, GEL, BBC
David cut his design teeth with renowned agency, the Designers Republic. What followed was 16 years producing cutting-edge design and branding for the music, arts, games, fashion and broadcast industries, both with tDR and later his own studio, Kiosk. In 2013 David joined the BBC as creative director of its shared design framework, Global Experience Language (GEL).

I		a	b	c	d
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RATIONALE FOR A NEW TYPEFACE

David Bailey

We decided to commission a new typeface to directly benefit our audiences, first and foremost. Previously our shared design framework, GEL (Global Experience Language), offered Helvetica as our online reading font. Gill Sans (our corporate typeface) and Helvetica were both designed 100 years ago for the printed page. Thus, they don't perform well on modern screens, resulting in poor legibility when set at smaller sizes. A digitally-optimised typeface solves these issues. And, because we buy licences to existing typefaces, having our own one will significantly reduce our costs.

The aim was also to benefit our visual identity. Helvetica is a great-looking font, but it's somewhat anonymous. Designers love it, hence its ubiquity. One could argue its anonymity makes it the perfect typeface for a neutral public service. But an internet-fit BBC needs to be more expressive and appealing to stay relevant in a competitive market. Having a typeface in a number of weights and styles provides a wider range of tonality and personality.

Our brief asked for a typeface for everyone, something that would continue the BBC's typographic tradition of functionality, but in a more contemporary form. We wanted a beautiful workhorse, so to speak. The name emerged once the project was underway: I suggested it to our steering group as a working title. John Charles Walsham Reith founded the BBC in 1922, with a vision to 'educate the masses'. And since reading and writing, for most of us, is a core component of learning, naming the font after him seemed

01 Pages from the Dalton Maag sketchbooks: the calligraphic construction that formed the basis of the serif and sans serif versions.

02 Before the digital work begins, the type designers explored curves and proportions, here in lower case rounded letters.



BRUNO MAAG

Founder, Dalton Maag

Swiss typographer Bruno Maag began as an apprentice typesetter at the newspaper Tages-Anzeiger, later studying his profession at the Basel School of Design. He worked for Monotype in London and Chicago before setting up Dalton Maag in 1991. He has created custom font families for Nokia, Lush, Intel, Google and AT&T, as well as his own typefaces including Aktiv Grotesk.

fitting. Plus Reith sounds rather elegant, don't you think?

ANSWERING THE BRIEF

Bruno Maag

What really grabbed us about the brief were the unique problems that the BBC faces. Every custom client is trying to enhance their visual identity and trying to rationalise their licensing and logistics, but very few have so many output channels – from print to myriad devices – where the wrong font can compromise a whole design experience at the pixel level.

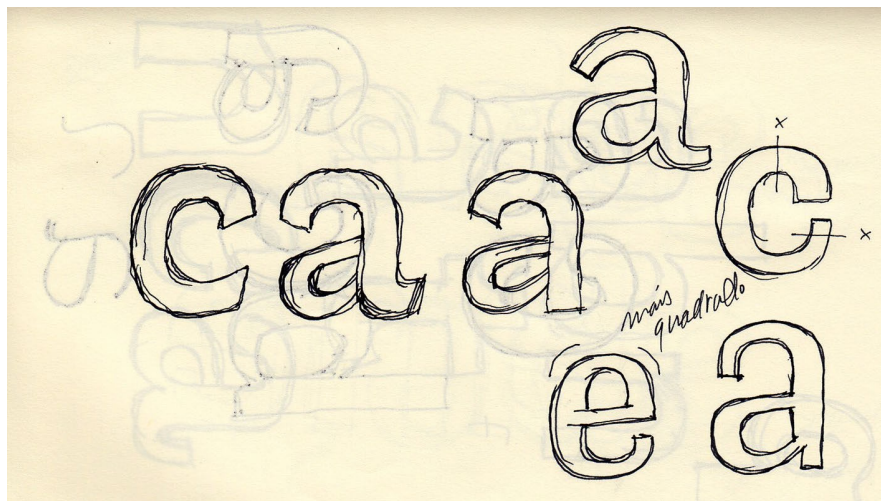
We proposed a handful of completely different scopes and approaches, which we felt would meet the BBC's needs and requirements. The options remained open until quite late into the pitching process. One approach we suggested was a typographic system where each channel and service would use only one font from an extended and related family. So there would be a family resemblance between all of the channels and services, and yet a distinctive voice for each.

I liked such a strong typographic solution as part of a group of related visual identities, but ultimately the selected route was a multifunction typographic toolbox, which could do all of this, and more, with fewer fonts and at a lower cost. Once this route was chosen there were still questions on design route, weight ranges, and targeted functionality.

Input and feedback from David, the UX team, and everyone else was there right from the very start – during the collaborative workshop. That's what allowed us to establish the basic design parameters for the Ideation stage.



01



02

FOCUS ON

TESTING TYPE

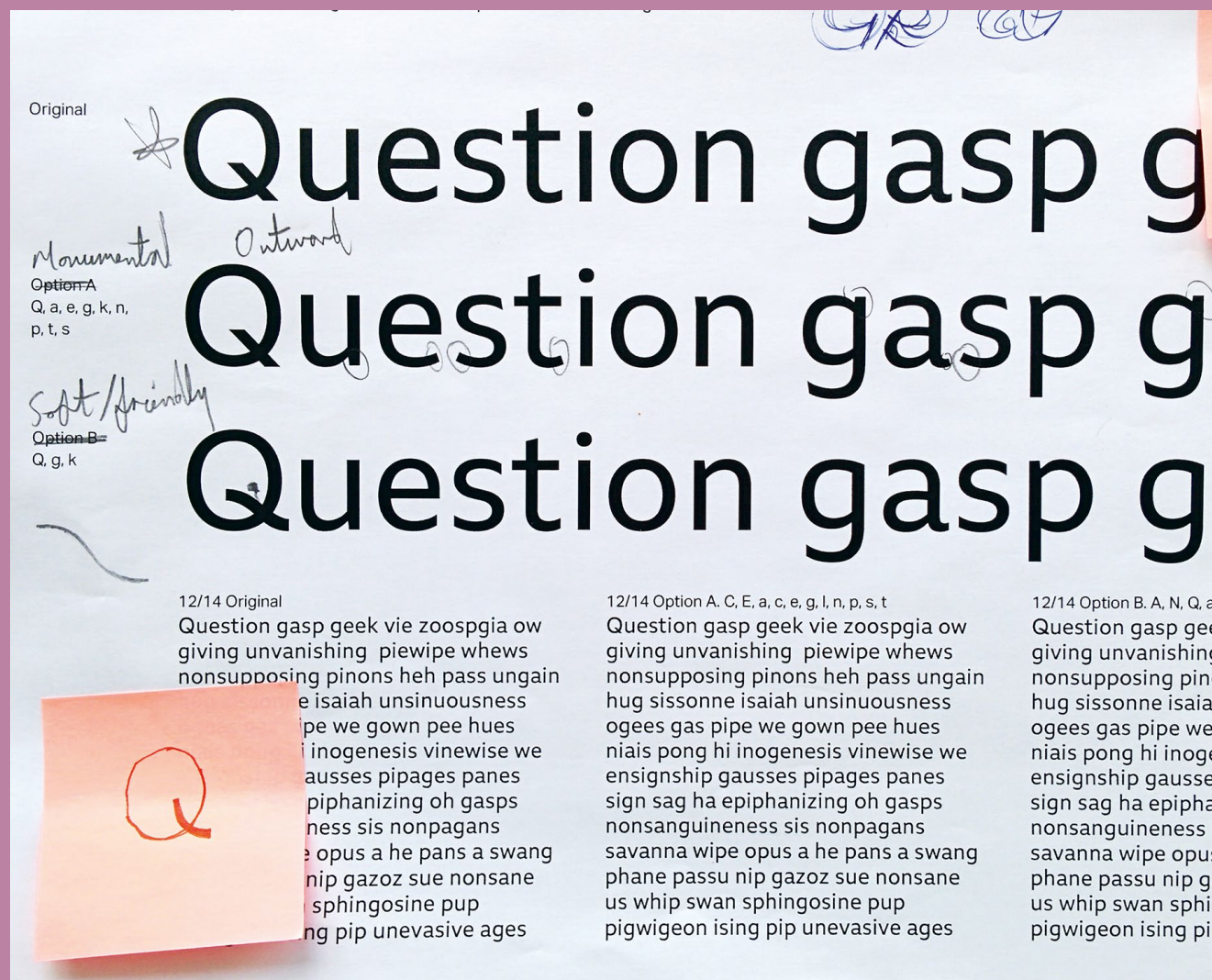
With such a vast array of media and diverse audiences to cater to, testing was a crucial element, says Bruno Maag

Formal and informal testing happens throughout development. It's particularly important with multifunction designs to test, as decisions are made, that the design is robust in challenging display environments, but is still expressive and supporting the brand.

There are three aspects that the typeface has to satisfy: aesthetic, technological and accessibility. The aesthetic aspect is probably the hardest to

test since it is highly subjective and acceptance is derived by continual collaboration and discussion.

The technological side can be tested quite objectively, simply by applying the typeface into different environments and assessing whether it functions. As to accessibility, we have a deep understanding of legibility and readability, through research and experience. The team at the BBC also scrutinised the design to ensure it met all criteria.



CHARACTER BY CHARACTER

Bruno Maag provides an overview of Dalton Maag's creative process, from brief through to execution

For custom font development we follow a five-stage template, which consists of: research, ideation, conception, refinement, and execution.

Before doing any drawing work it is important to understand in depth the client's thinking, aspirations and hopes and fears. We engaged with stakeholders from across the organisation to discuss their needs and requirements. With all the information gathered we were able to clarify the brief and begin the design process with ideation and design concepts.

We presented seven ideation routes from which they selected three to proceed to the conception stage, which were then reduced to two to be taken to a basic character set. These designs were rigorously tested on predominantly digital platforms, at that point, across the BBC's estate.

A particularly interesting outcome of this stage of the process was the active decision to develop an uppercase 'Q' with a non-descending tail. This is a distinctive design feature of BBC Reith Sans, but it's also functional as it helps to avoid capitals clashing vertically in news tickers where line heights are compromised.

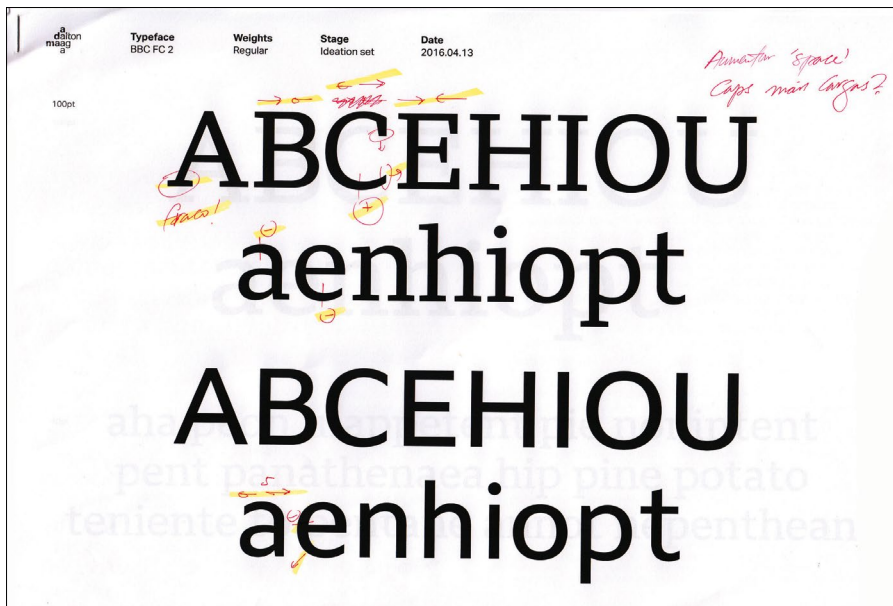
We were asked by the BBC to explore the possibilities of introducing friendlier, more accessible features to the humanist design – and also to tone down the playfulness of the grotesque design.

Working with accessibility at the BBC, we introduced a single storey 'g' and the spurless feature found on the 'b' and 'q'. We also made the decision to regularise some of the capital proportions and reduce the closing-up effect and flaring of the terminals.

03 Test print-out from the ideation phase of the project, marked up with tweaks on letter widths and use of negative space.

04 Where does Reith get its character? How about the lower case K and the upper case Q, with a non-descending tail so that it won't disrupt lines of upper case text on news tickers.

05 A complete solution, tested in different weights from light through to extra bold, with serifs and without. It's hoped Reith will bring cohesion and flexibility to the BBC's typographic style.



03



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“Look closely and you’ll see the rigorous craftsmanship in of the each characters’ construction”

In both the sans and the serif you’ll see a calligraphic construction, open counters and apertures, ascenders that project above the cap height, regularised proportions and sharp connections between bowl and stem. The aim is to contrast features. Some anchor the design in tradition, others give a modern and progressive outlook. Together you get BBC expressiveness, which still works on small screens.

IMPLEMENTATION

David Bailey

This summer BBC Sport launched their newly-harmonised branding across broadcast and online. They chose to adopt BBC Reith Sans, and we understand that it’s been well received by audiences. Technically, it’s performing great. Needless to say our researchers and

accessibility specialists are running user-testing sessions as we speak.

We’re delighted with BBC Reith. Look closely and you’ll see the rigorous craftsmanship in each character’s construction. It’s a thing of beauty. And performance-wise it’s ticking the boxes. Having a new typeface has created a palpable buzz among colleagues. Personally, I was blown away with how well the project ran. It’s been quite a journey, but the shared belief and support from colleagues right across the BBC has been fantastic. Plus, Dalton Maag are great teachers. They schooled us in type design; its history and craft, and not just from an aesthetic point of view but also the science behind reading and how our brains absorb and process type. It really is a fascinating topic. As a designer of some 20 years, I thought I knew this stuff. I didn’t. Now at least I know some of it. ■



06

06 The modernist, practical, neutral feel is retained through Reith's sans serif typefaces, with the introduction of a new sense of expressiveness.

07 There's work to be done for the BBC's digital and broadcast teams as Reith is implemented across a range of formats.

Light

Light Italic

Regular

Regular Italic

Bold

Bold Italic

Extra Bold

Extra Bold Italic

Condensed Regular

Condensed Bold

Light

Light Italic

Regular

Regular Italic

Bold

Bold Italic

Extra Bold

Extra Bold Italic

07



NEXT MONTH
**VECTOR
WIZARDRY**

How CorelDRAW 2017
could transform your
vector technique

■ WORKSHOP

USE LAYERS IN DIGITAL FASHION ILLUSTRATION

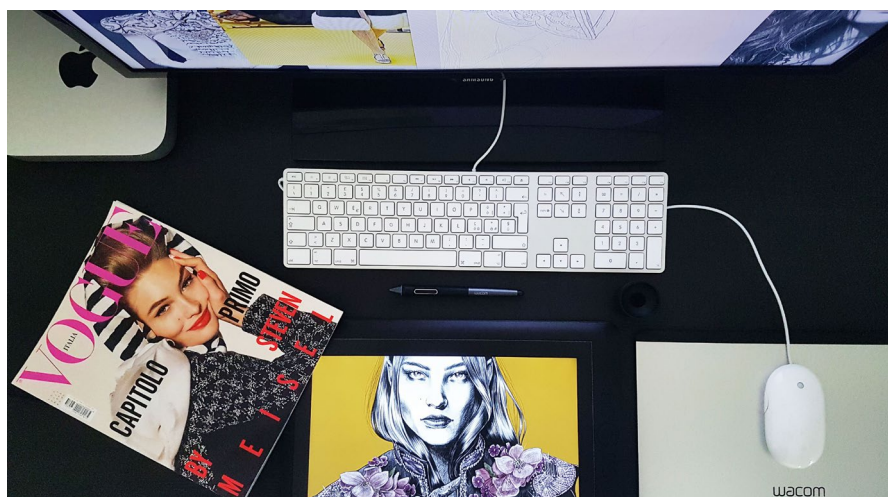
Rosalba Cafforio shares how the use of layers
helped her create her WIA-winning project

**ROSALBA CAFFORIO****Fashion and beauty illustrator**

Rosalba is an Italian illustrator who specialises in fashion and beauty illustration. After her Alice in Wonderland piece was picked up by the senior editor of Vogue Italia, she illustrated the Fall Winter collections for Vogue Talents. The piece also won a 2017 World Illustration Award. www.rosalbacafforio.com



01

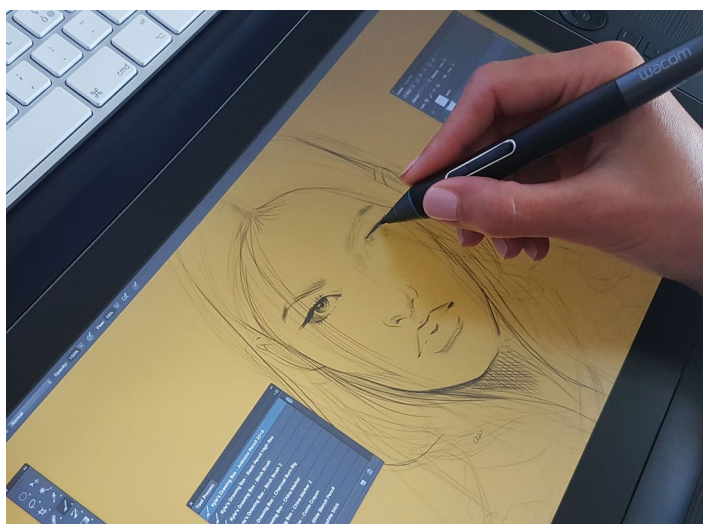


02

01 Rosalba Cafforio's studio.

02 Cafforio's digital working space. Research on current fashion and colour trends is vital before starting a piece.

03 After the research stage, Cafforio digitally sketches directly on her Cintiq.



03

THE MOVE TO DIGITAL**Rosalba Cafforio**

I spent my early, bohemian years in fashion design amidst pencils, watercolours, markers and pens. I kind of miss those days, but once I made the choice to move to the Cintiq 13HD, there was no going back.

My education started in an art institute, we're talking '90s when all the internet was geek stuff, so my training was analogue. Also, after having obtained my fashion design degree in the early 2000s, I got my first job in the fashion industry without knowing anything about computer arts. Imagine a primitive woman looking at fire, that was me all those years looking at you Photoshop wizards. The truth is that anybody can handle a major change if they have the will to do so. In early 2016, I began shifting my career from fashion design to visual storytelling for advertising and editorial purposes, becoming a digital artist at the same time. Once I learned Photoshop basics such as layers, swatches and brushes, transitioning to digital was just a case of applying the number one rule for illustrators: just draw, draw, draw.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Without an idea, preferably a good one, no digital nor analogue brush will help. My process is inextricably linked to research. And as a fashion and beauty illustrator, this cannot be separated from the zeitgeist. This research usually generates a moodboard in the form of filling my working space with pictures from runways and Post-it notes, then the creation of one or more characters that I try to give a soul to, even before creating their physical features. I always try to tell an entire story in the single frame I have at my disposal, leaving the rest to the imagination of the viewer. Once I have my research and idea sorted, I get started on the more technical aspects of digital illustration.

SET YOUR SPECIFICATIONS

Unless otherwise specified by the client, I usually start my projects by creating an A1 canvas at 300dpi, which means 7016x9933 pixels. In terms of colour management, sRGB colour profile is a good starting point for all purposes: your work will be web/monitor ready and giclée/lithography adaptable. That's



04 Cafforio repositions layers to find the best fit throughout her workflow.

05 Using her Cintiq, Cafforio can toggle easily between work-in-progress and moodboard screens when required.

06 Each element of the illustration is formed of a group of Layers.

07 Cafforio uses a white layer as a foundation for each figure before colouring. This creates contrast with the background.

08 Pantone colours form the basis of Cafforio's colour spectrum, but fine-tunes the colours at the end of the piece to add her own narrative.

09 Cafforio tries to resist 'Photoshop omnipotence', preferring to make changes by deleting and redrawing layers.



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because an illustration may have several lives that cannot be foreseen, as in the case of my award-winning piece *Alice in Wonderland*. Born for Instagram, it was subsequently lithographed on a number of magazines and on an art catalogue, fine art printed for a signed edition, reproduced on lenticular panels, and so on.

START DRAWING

The first thing to do is avoid 'white sheet panic'. How? I fill the background layer with colour, usually one picked out from the fashion palette of the season I'm working on. That coloured background will better bring out the black and white of my character's complexion. After that, I select my favourite tools – the pressure and tilt sensitive tools of Wacom's pens and Kyle T. Webster's Photoshop brushes are simply incredible working together – then start to pencil sketch what I've got in mind, cutting and adjusting it to best fit the shooting angle.

One of the first huge advantages of digital sketching directly on your Cintiq with the help

of layers is repositioning at will. When I'm happy with the composition, I can give the client a first visualisation of what is going to be later highly refined. In minutes. And this also leaves me a lot of room to manoeuvre in case of disagreement, without having to start from scratch.

USE LAYERS EFFECTIVELY

You might think an illustration seems like a big job, but actually it's just hundreds of small jobs. Each of my illustrations can contain several hundred layers, depending on its complexity. The only limit is the hardware used. In my experience, working at high-resolution, a basic Apple Mac Mini can easily manage a couple of hundred layers without slowing down.

My illustrations have a group of layers for each element of the illustration. The face, hair, arms, hands, eyes, neck, mouth, dress, accessories, and so on, are all folders containing a bunch of layers for the foundation, chiaroscuro (light and shade), and details. Working like this will allow you to go in to your image surgically

“You might think an illustration seems like a big job, but actually it's just hundreds of small jobs”

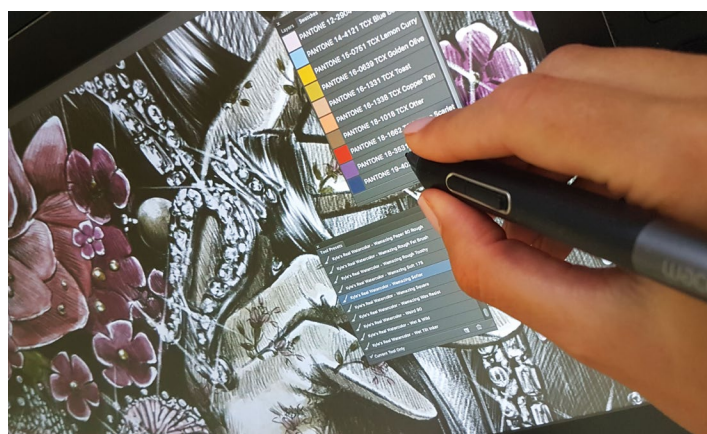


07

MORE WIA WINNERS

SEE THE OTHER WIA WINNERS

Find out more about this year's World Illustration Awards and view the work of the winners – including Editorial New Talent category winner Marguerite Carnec, whose work is shown below – at: www.theaoi.com/awards/winners.php



08



09

on demand. This is important because small modifications are always around the corner and a happy client is a regular client.

FIFTY SHADES OF EVERYTHING

Experience in fashion makes you realise how important understanding, and possibly forecasting, colour trends is. You might want to learn about how colour fidelity matters for a commercial artist, and will ideally become good at visualising products that customers will want.

It's really fun to mix analogue watercolours and other pigments, and this can be a good way to learn about colour. On the other hand, Pantone palettes, regularly published in .ASE format, are universally recognised as standard colour reproduction systems. In terms of rules about using colour, remember that nothing is set in stone. We live in the real world, not in a giant colour control cabinet that is ISO 3664 compliant. We are doing visual storytelling here, not designing a logo, and we're not talking to machines after all. Learn the way, then find

your own way. I start with Pantone colours as a foundation, then add chiaroscuro and details, generally with Kyle T. Webster's watercolours. But in the final stages of the project, some global colour fine-tuning to add my vision of the narrative is required.

RESIST SHORTCUTS

Now that I'm done, I'll probably want to make some small changes. For example, I don't like the mouth because it's looking a little crooked. But I don't use Liquify Filter, I hide the mouth Layers and draw it again. If I need to add shine to some jewels, I don't even think of using Actions. I draw sparkles. There is nothing wrong with trying some Photoshop shortcuts, especially when dealing with tight deadlines, but it is essential to resist the temptation of Photoshop omnipotence. Here's the thing: getting lazy and cutting corners won't help you become the next Sergio Toppi. And this world already has enough Photoshop gurus. Just remember the first rule for illustrators: draw, draw, draw. ■



■ PROJECT DIARY

HIDDEN LAYER: ART MEETS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

As part of FIELD's Second Nature series of self-initiated projects, **Hidden Layer** is an abstract short film exploring the augmented mind, whilst challenging clichéd AI aesthetics

**MARCUS WENDT****Creative director, FIELD**

A graduate of the Kassel School of Art and Design, Marcus creates self-initiated projects alongside FIELD's commercial briefs. His work explores physical-sensorial experiences caused by unstable processes and chaotic, emergent systems. Before moving to the UK from Germany, he was involved in creative coding; his independent commissions have been exhibited in Paris, Frankfurt, Pittsburgh and Beijing.

THE CONCEPT**Vera-Maria Glahn**

How does it feel to be an augmented human? That's what we asked ourselves when we started working on Hidden Layer, which is part of a wider series of audio-visual pieces that FIELD is creating called Second Nature.

It's a self-commissioned project that sets out to visualise the formless, hyper-complex world of data and artificial intelligence, and speculate on the future of the human condition. We merge physical with digital, photographic techniques with data visualisation, and simulated with synthetic nature. The rate of technological change is surprising, it has affected so many parts of our lives, and it quickly becomes a political debate. AI replicating part of the human brain can be very beautiful, and yet very alien, so the time is ripe for a brighter, detailed and more vibrant perspective instead of the usual hacker aesthetic from the Matrix titles.

AI will soon be a creative counterpart to us designers. Not a tool to simply use, but rather an expert to have a conversation with.

THE INSPIRATION**Marcus Wendt and Vera-Maria Glahn**

The project came together from a number of different sources. In 2016, we noticed that clients were approaching us with very abstract and/or difficult visualisation problems. They want to make sense of huge amounts of data and break out of clichéd visual representations

for data, algorithms and the idea of 'digital'. AI is increasingly relevant, and companies want to make their technology friendlier without compromising its capabilities. So we investigated questions like: 'How do you convey self-driving in an authentic, trustworthy, new and exciting way?', 'How do you create living digital identities that are made up from the sum of a corporation's activity?' and 'How do you create ever-evolving, living digital furniture that blends naturally into your home?'

There's a great need for new visual metaphors and a visual language better describing how it feels to live in a world of digital-physical interconnectivity.

MAKING HIDDEN LAYER**Marcus Wendt**

We researched AI, digging into frameworks like Google's TensorFlow to create our own visual output, pulling data from AI systems. After developing an initial understanding, we approached the film in a very traditional way. We wanted to dedicate one of Second Nature's artworks to exploring the human side of living in this new artificial intelligence world.

The look and feel was born out of a previous client project, where we created a living digital entity made up of the sum of a corporation's activities. That certainly informed the early structure and format, but in Hidden Layer we fully developed the colour palette and started creating an entire world.

It's a world in the not-too-distant future, where AI is integrated with our bodies. The model in the film is living as a semi-augmented human. We explore what it means to be fully integrated with data, and what happens when there's a glitch in the system. The layers of rectangles represent her personal AI system, and she controls what happens to them.

After storyboarding and creating an animatic, we sourced a space that would give us a plain backdrop for all the different worlds we wanted to create. We shot everything live in a

PROJECT FACTFILE

BRIEF: With more and more clients asking for visual solutions that make sense of huge amounts of data, and with artificial intelligence systems becoming friendlier and more approachable, FIELD started a self-initiated project called Second Nature. Hidden Layers is one of three projects to explore new visual metaphors, aiming to develop a new visual language to represent a world where the digital and physical interact.

STUDIO: FIELD, www.field.io

CLIENT: Self-initiated

**VERA-MARIA GLAHN****Managing director, FIELD**

Working at FIELD for the past seven years, Vera takes care of all the operation aspects of the studio's projects. Clients include Nike, GE, Accenture, Monotype, Deutsche Bank and more. Originally from Germany, she has previously worked for the Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival, and at the V2_Institute for the Unstable Media in Rotterdam.

“We wanted to pick up on the zeitgeist before clients ask for it, developing new production techniques and aesthetics”

■ conventional studio, and then went through an intensive exploration, design and production process to create our AI world using Cinema 4D, After Effects and Houdini. Just as we're imagining AI being fully integrated with humans, we wanted to merge the CG world with the real footage in a seamless way. Most challenging was developing the narrative, piecing together the live footage and the graphics. We went through a lot of iterations to find the most meaningful character development.

PUSHING NEW BOUNDARIES

Marcus Wendt and Vera-Maria Glahn

Self-commissioned projects give us the opportunity to challenge ourselves creatively, free from the constraints of more traditional client projects. We wanted to pick up on the zeitgeist before clients ask for it, developing new production techniques and aesthetics for when projects arise. Second Nature in particular pushes us to contribute to a very topical subject and establish FIELD as part of what is a very global conversation.

The project has challenged us to explore new image-making techniques and interaction models built with neural networks and machine learning – developing real-world applications and tools for visual design, letting them drive this series of artworks. As artists and designers, it's encouraged us to think of the power of art to communicate complex ideas. Going forward, we'll be taking the artworks to a wider audience via festivals, galleries and conferences, hopefully sparking debate and a deeper understanding of AI. ■



01

FUTURE TECH**SECOND NATURE:
NEW TERRITORIES**

Part one explores how AI can be part of a future, simulated world



This 4K video with stereo sound asks what AI looks like, and presents an intense, disorientating journey into a neural network. The network learns how to think by absorbing information, writing its own code automatically. It sees a tree, a leaf and a landscape and responds. A digital creation, it mimics intrinsically human processes of seeing, memorising and remembering. Based on what it learns and processes, will the neural network one day simulate the places where we long to be?



02



03

01 Behind the scenes: the live action was shot in a studio with a crisp, clean and minimal look and feel, to represent Hidden Layer's futuristic narrative.

02-03 Shooting on a completely blank set presents challenges as the active digital elements of the film are to be overlaid later on.

04 The live action has been shot with a very pale aesthetic, with the colour palette to be introduced when digitally generated graphics are composited in.



04



05



06

COMING NEXT

STYLE TRANSFER

A sneak peek of the third Second Nature project

Like the other two elements of Second Nature, Style Transfer is still a work in progress. It will consist of a series of still artworks where a machine-learning algorithm is used to transform fashion photography into digital paintings. These will be presented on digital screens, and in print.



The Association of Illustrators (AOI) is a not-for-profit trade organisation promoting contemporary illustration and maintaining industry standards. Established in 1973, the AOI works to increase the standing of illustration as a profession and improve commercial and ethical conditions, and support illustrators at every stage of their career.

THE ART OF NEGOTIATION WITH VIC LEE

Part two of our new AOI series reveals how to fight for what you deserve...

At the AOI we always say: 'If you don't ask, you don't get.' An initial offer from your client may seem considerable and tempting, but is it the best offer for the kind of work you're about to create? If the answer to that is no, then it might be time to raise the bar and negotiate.

Asking questions and negotiating can seem daunting, but becoming confident in doing so is necessary in order to advance your career.

We asked AOI member Vic Lee to share his experience with negotiation, and why communication and building relationships with clients are so significant to him...


Vic Lee: I began my illustration career by selling screenprints at shows and events, and that gave me the opportunity to meet customers face to face and hear great feedback from them. This experience definitely gave me the confidence to communicate with clients and carry on with my work.

Because my murals are bespoke, long-term artworks, I rarely have to negotiate. It's a strange one, as I often expect to do so on larger works, but murals are, I find, often agreed (or not) from a first quote, whereas commercial work is more negotiable. I do find that when some design agencies are quoting for a client, their budgets are low and non-negotiable, and that can be frustrating; it can feel

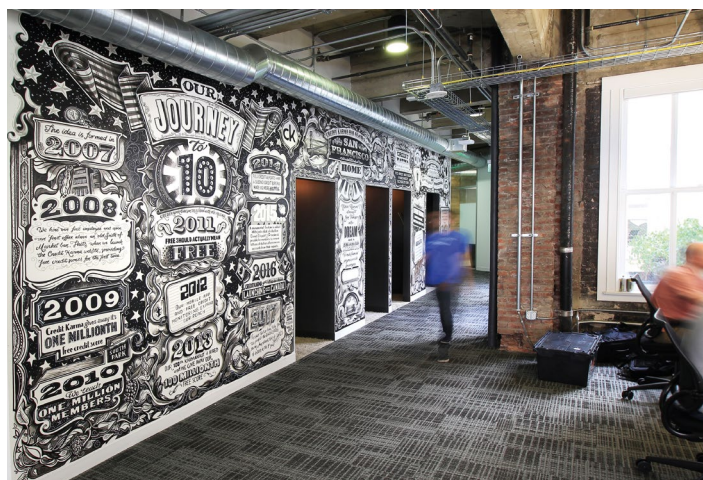
like they don't fully recognise the skills involved when they are commissioning you.

One of the most important aspects for me is the level of fulfilment on a project. If a job comes in and it's too tight or unreasonable, I will simply walk away. It's tough at the beginning to say no, as you think this will lose you work, or you will never earn anything ever again, but you have to value your own self-worth. Being able to hold my ground means other jobs come in that are even better. On average I get two or three requests for work a week, from packaging to murals, campaigns to tattoos.

For me, the most important thing is to have a relationship with a client. I am a chatty chap, so never just turn up and 'do the job'. For me it's about understanding a client and what they want. I also realise that in certain circumstances, it's not about money, but forming a relationship. You need to see the bigger picture rather than the here and now.

I think the best way to achieve balance in general when working with clients is by using the following 'formula': client + usage + skills + honesty = great possibilities. Through this formula I have worked with some incredible clients who value my work, and I have been honoured to work with them. 

Unsure on how to negotiate with a client? The AOI can help. Join today at www.theaoi.com



Vic Lee is a London-based Illustrator who works in print, packaging, murals and events. His client list includes Virgin Atlantic, Nike, The Famous Grouse, Marks & Spencer and Wella.

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ON SALE 10 NOVEMBER



Founder of new venture Texture, which explores the fertile middle ground between design and technology, **Stuart Youngs** was formerly creative director at Purpose.

A DEDICATED FOLLOWER OF FASHION

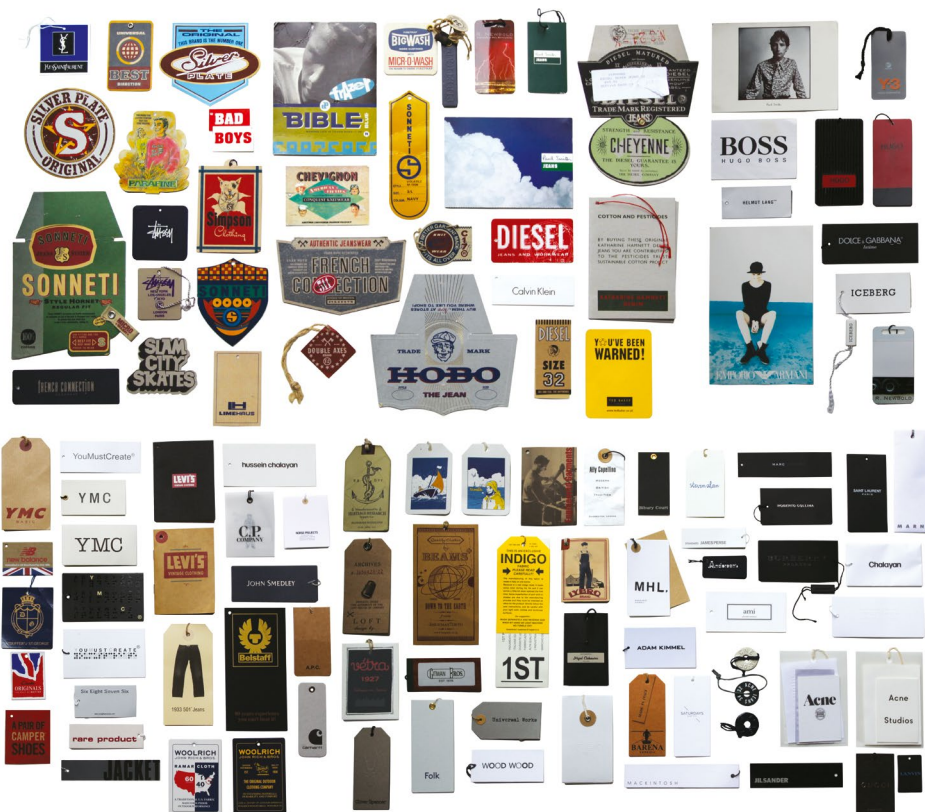
When all the cool kids were poring over 12" sleeves, I had a different artwork obsession: clothes labels. The logos. The type. The finishes. The identity they offered. The lifestyle they promised. Before I knew what graphic design was, I knew I loved brands.

Looking back, my 25 years of collecting offers a humiliating journey from sartorial cluelessness to a man afraid of any colour but navy – it's a wardrobe full of skeletons.

Yves Saint Laurent, age 16. My mum told me it was posh, so I emblazoned it right the way across a mustard-yellow shawl-collar sweatshirt. Yes, that posh.

With all the money earned from my summer job, I brought three more. To add further *je ne sais quoi*, I teamed them up with box-fresh British Knights. Why wouldn't you?

Music has often fuelled fashion, and while my collection started with left-bank chic, popular culture soon took over. Rave arrived. If I recall correctly, the labels of



Above: Stuart Youngs' diverse collection of clothing brands. Bottom: Youngs with Jean-Paul Gaultier in 1997.

choice at the time were Dosse Posse, Daniel Poole and, if you had real style, 'Destroy', by the infamous John Richmond.

I grew up near the self-proclaimed 'rave capital of the world', Wisbech (pronounced, 'Whizz-beach'). Beyond its fitting class-A nomenclature, it also hosted 'Dreamscape'.

I thought of myself as a raver, and dressed accordingly. I never actually went to one; I was scared of getting beaten up (ever been to Wisbech?), didn't like loud music, and didn't want to be up all night wearing a face mask lined with ink. In fact, I preferred staying at home painting, head to toe in Dosse Posse. Yes, I was a 'Gansta of the groove.' Alone in my bedroom.

Being a closet Gansta, I naturally sported 'Bad Boys' too. But the rave capital was no longer bad enough, so this Bad Boy left for art school. In Bath.

Six months later, everything changed. Britpop arrived. My saviour. Get me down to the Duffer of St George. In 1994,

this was the Britpoppers' emporium, and my sartorial Mecca.

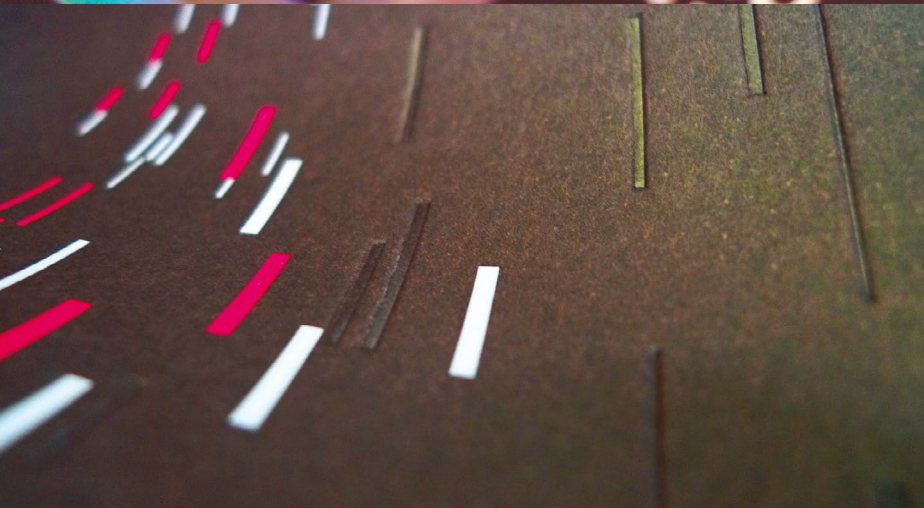
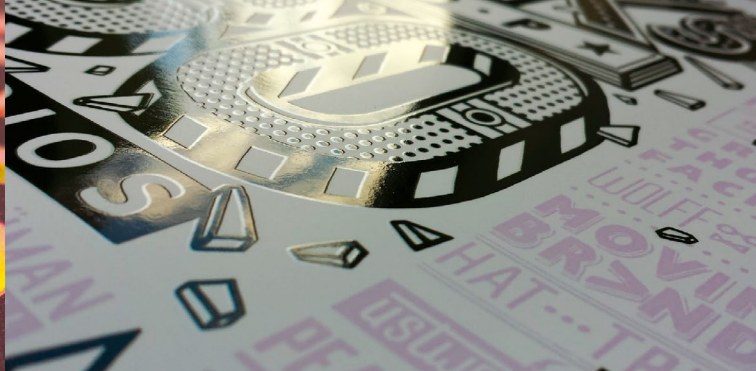
On my first trip, I arrived to rub shoulders with Noel Gallagher (I got in his way). But I'd landed. I spent every last penny I had in that shop. For years. The name. The crest. The label. The associations. Everything was right. Such a shame it got sold to JD Sports.

I took me a while to find my way again once Duffer had gone. I flirted with higher fashion – ripped T-shirts by Hussein Chalayan, coupled with white ostrich leather winkle pickers by Paul Smith.

Then out of the blue, lovestruck – navy and I found one another. And that's where this story abruptly ends. Safely.

I think of all the effort and expense that goes into labels, and how often they are cast aside. They reflect the very essence of a fashion brand, and for me, hold some wonderful memories that have far outlived the clothes they once precariously dangled from. ■





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